

T. John Jamieson

A Monarchist's Fourth of July

Don Herzog

Kafka the Dreamer

THE AMERICAN SPECTATOR®

VOL. 15

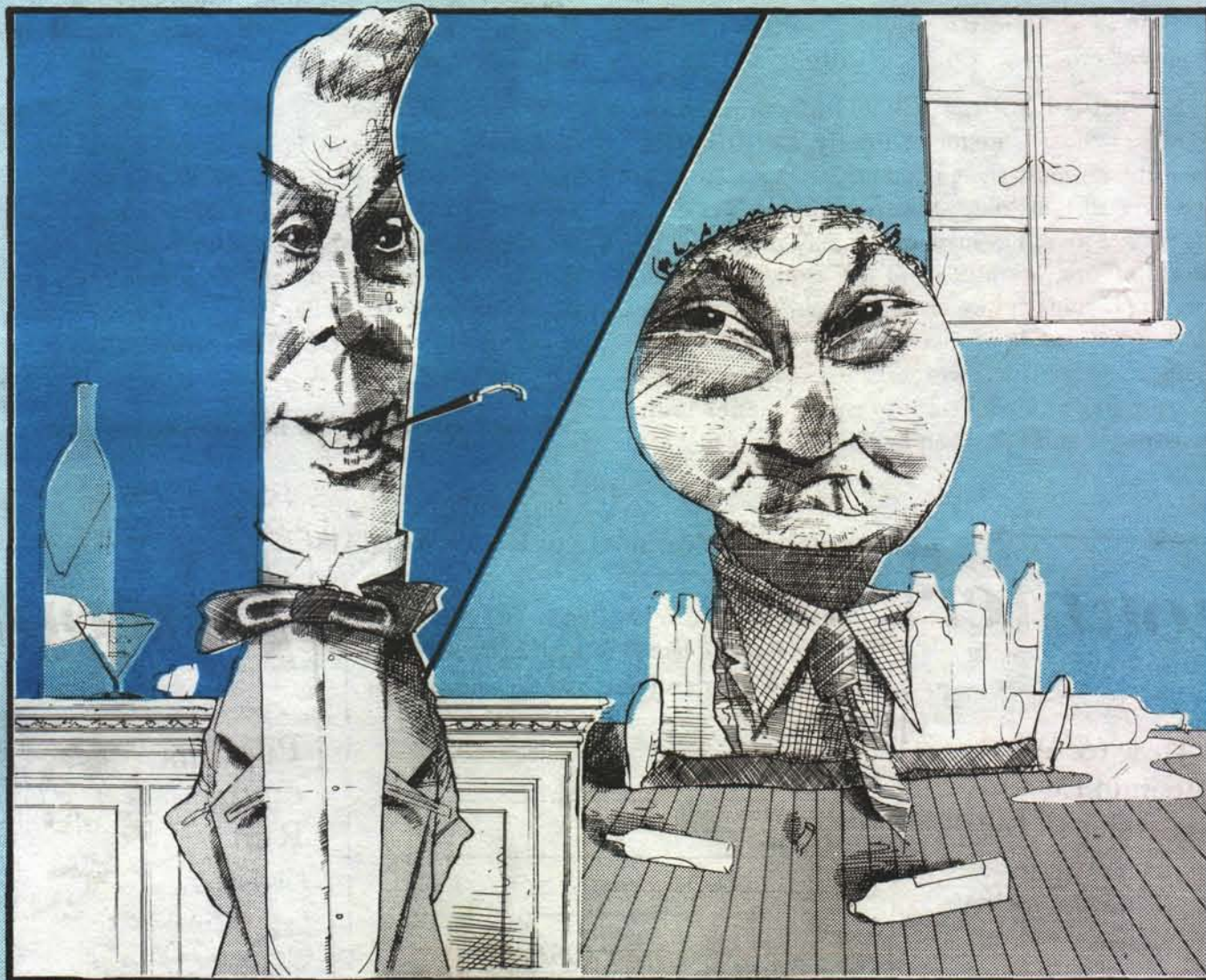
JULY 1982

NO. 7

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High Life / Low Life



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EDITED BY R. EMMETT TYRRELL, JR.

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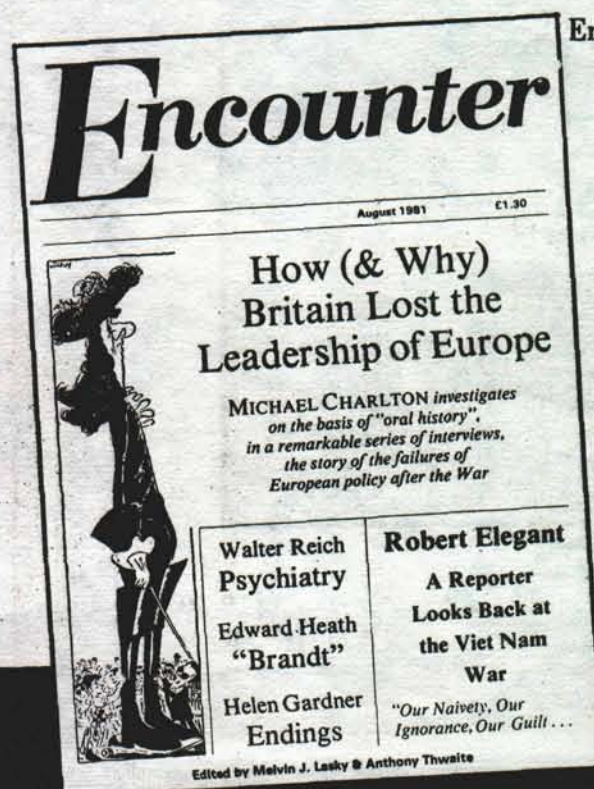
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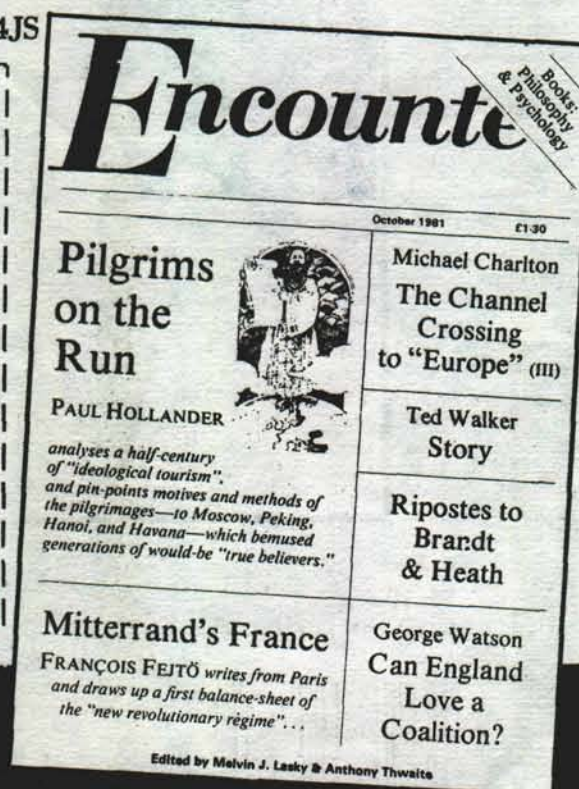
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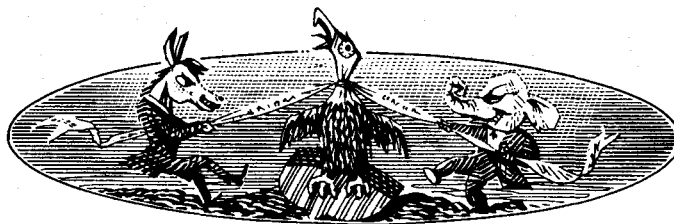
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COVER Drawing by John Springs



CONGRESS, LOBBIED BY MOUNTEBANKS

by Tom Bethell

It is with a heavy heart that one turns to the querulous topic of civil rights. The very phrase conjures up an unappealing image of "righteous" people with picket signs and loud slogans coming out of their mouths, the Rev. Jesse Jackson somewhere in the picture, and buckets of accusations being emptied out over the heads of less indignant segments of the population. Somewhere off to one side there is a lawyer from the American Civil Liberties Union, taking notes and making sure that no one does anything to interfere with the stream of vilification from the righteous.

Ideally, one should not have to think about civil rights at all in a civil society; just as one should not have to think about the money supply, the erosion of savings by inflation, or one's personal safety while walking down the street. One did not, in fact, have to think about these things in the post-World War II England in which I grew up. Nor, by and large, did one have to pay attention to such matters in the United States until about 15 years ago.

Today, however, one cannot help but notice that there are multiplying, ominous entities called "civil rights groups." Their purposes are never clearly defined, but one understands readily enough that it is not the general welfare they have at heart. They are mostly organized pressure groups whose function is to bully politicians into conferring privileges upon them. This, the politicians often see, is preferable to being labelled racist or sexist. The conferred privileges are then called—with defiant tone and accusatory glare—"rights." And there is an organization called the "Leadership Conference on Civil Rights," which actually represents some 161 civil rights organizations.

Tom Bethell, The American Spectator's Washington correspondent, holds the DeWitt Wallace Chair in Communications at the American Enterprise Institute.

It should be obvious to almost everyone by now—Jews especially, I should imagine, considering how well they have done in America without government privileges and how over-represented they are in proportion to their numbers in important positions (and thus how exposed they are to danger)—that the word "rights" now signals a clear and present danger to individual liberties. The alert citizen who saw Ted Kennedy and Tip O'Neill strolling down the street and telling everyone how compassionate they were feeling that day would sensibly cross the street, firmly gripping his wallet as he did so. In the same way, were he then to spot Jesse Jackson and Joseph L. Rauh, Jr.

bearing down upon him and talking loudly about expanding civil rights for all, our poor beleaguered citizen would prudently run to the nearest porch and request asylum. (Rauh is a left-wing lawyer in Washington who today serves both as vice-president of the A.D.A. and as general counsel for the aforementioned leadership conference.)

Originally, rights applied to everyone, not to one or another group demarcated by genes or peculiarity of behavior. "Voting rights" meant roughly that all above a certain age (save the incarcerated and insane) should be allowed to vote. Thus rights could be "expanded," to the extent that groups previously excluded—e.g., blacks—were now included. Extending the right to more people would not take it away from the previously enfranchised. This same reasoning applies, obviously, to free speech, the freedom of worship, the right to bear arms, and so on.

Rights in this genuine sense really could be broadened today, by extending the most basic right of all, the right to life, to unborn fetuses. Unfortunately, the Supreme Court has seen fit to subordinate this right to unencumbered participation in the indoor sport called sex; otherwise known as "the right to control one's body." Yet this is one important area—the right to life itself—in which our murky "civil rights groups" show precious little interest.

Rights, of course, cannot be expanded by extending political privileges to more and more groups at the expense of everyone else. A country in which civil rights groups are multiplying is clearly becoming less civil, not more so. To suggest otherwise is to promote conflict in the guise of encouraging harmony. Elements within the news media seem to have followed this strategy, whether out of ignorance or ideological preference it is hard to tell.

Mary Thornton, for example, de-

scribed in her lead paragraph on page one of the *Washington Post* the following development with regard to the Voting Rights Act:

The Senate Judiciary Committee yesterday approved a bipartisan compromise bill to extend and strengthen key provisions of the 1965 Voting Rights Act, defeating a series of weakening amendments.

That sounds good, doesn't it? The Voting Rights Act means letting blacks vote, right? Are we still so churlish as to try to weaken such an act? Why of course we are. Everyone knows that racism still flourishes. But the judiciary committee defeated the forces of reaction and even managed to "strengthen key provisions." Well how nice. How reassuring. Moderation and wisdom still prevail. On to the sports pages.

Well of course the controversy over the Voting Rights Act has got nothing to do with allowing blacks to vote, which is not at issue. Something else is at stake, as indeed the alert reader of the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* could tell simply by reading the headlines, prominently displaying the phrase "voting rights." Otherwise, why would they be mounting this big newsroom campaign on behalf of a cause that was not in dispute? Because there was another cause, and to discern what it was you had to read the fine print very carefully indeed. At stake was providing litigants with a legal basis for alleging that elections are discriminatory without requiring them to show that anyone intended to discriminate: The election results themselves should be permitted to form the basis of suits. In short, it was an extension of the tried-and-true affirmative action strategy into the realm of voting. Results, not intentions, could prove society to be sinful and thus in need of government's whip; the results of exams, the results of



admissions, the results of hiring—and now the results of voting.

The Supreme Court in 1980 shot this idea down, however, sensibly ruling that litigants who didn't like the election results would have to prove discriminatory intent. Then, in a most unusual development, the House of Representatives moved to the Left of the Supreme Court and incorporated a "results" clause into the extension of the Act. The subsequent editorial drum-beating by the *Washington Post* and *New York Times*, accompanied by their not-very-subtle failure to elucidate that more was at stake than blacks being allowed into voting booths, was clearly intended to browbeat the Senate into going along with the House. Lurking not very far in the background was the implicit and looming accusation of racism.

Unfortunately for America, the man responsible for holding his finger in the dike at this point was Bob Dole of Kansas, who has turned out to be a man of almost indiscernible principles. He took his finger out of the dike and put it in the wind. Accusations of racism were in the air,

so he came out with a "compromise" which was wholly satisfactory to Joseph Rauh, the Left, the "civil rights groups," and the *Washington Post*. It retained the "results" test among a "totality of circumstances." This was like rescuing a man who cannot have one thing (say, cigarettes) by offering him many things (including cigarettes).

It is interesting to consider why shifting the concept of rights away from individuals to groups is such a key element in the leftist agenda. In the first place, of course, white males, collectively guilt-ridden as they still seem to be, will certainly be the losers in any political allocation of position in society. Let's see now . . . 53 percent of the pie of privilege to women, another 6 percent (say) for black males, the same again for Hispanics, then some thinner slices for Indians, Orientals, homosexuals, handicapped . . . this could leave almost nothing left over for the wimps (white male Protestants—I leave it to your imagination to fill in the vowel). And that is a prospect

devoutly to be hoped for by almost any leftist.

Second—and this is quite apparent but somehow it never seems to be brought up—collectivism (the hope that someday individuals will subordinate their interests to that of the group) is itself the goal of socialism. Thus a notion of collective entitlement is about as direct a path to socialism as is possible to imagine.

It is here that one begins to see the basic weakness of the claim that the concept of rights can meaningfully be extended to groups. A net that is large enough to encompass a whole group of people must by the same token have interstices large enough to allow individuals to fall through them. No one ever seems to make this obvious point: If a company is, for the sake of example, under a government order to employ one hundred blacks, what is to stop the boss from quite arbitrarily firing one black, and replacing him with another? The boss, in fact, could replace him with someone who was even blacker than the first. What "results" test could the one who had been fired invoke to make the

argument that he had been discriminated against? None that I can think of. In any event, one can see from this example that the allocation of "rights" on the basis of group membership not only does not protect individual rights, but actually undermines them, for the simple reason that individuals are no longer what counts; it is the group that counts. The gene pool, if you will.

As for the Voting Rights Act, the potential for unintended consequences down the road is so great, as with almost all other liberal reforms, that one does wonder whether the liberals ever stop for a minute and furrow their brows.

"You want redistricting, with the lines drawn so that some districts include at least 65 percent blacks?" say the Republicans and the dwellers-in-the-suburbs. "Fine, we'll give you 90." That way, the remaining districts will tend to be more Republican (since blacks are overwhelmingly Democratic). White liberal Democrats are likely to be the losers—the very people who have been pushing this absurd scheme. Maybe Dole had it figured out all along. But I doubt it. □

EDITORIAL



ONE FAT THESPIAN

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

I have long considered those who disparage our President for his Hollywood roots supremely obtuse. Every American pol is, *au fond*, an artist in false face, or he is no pol at all. An aspiring statesman might be brave, bold, and brilliant. He might also be abounding in Christian charity and all the desiderata glorified by the masters of your local mental health association, but unless he can actually demonstrate these personal treasures he might as well be a sausage.

Last month Ronald Reagan was not the only actor sitting in the ornate President's Room of the Senate discussing a budget compromise. There was also the Hon. Thomas P. (Tip) O'Neill, who, had he not been

Adapted from RET's weekly Washington Post column syndicated by King Features.

engaged in the political arts to these last four decades, might very well have become a Shakespearean player of the first rank. What a rumped and roisterous Falstaff he would make! Trim him down, cross-garter him and he would give you a splendid Malvolio; and with suitable alterations he is the constable Dogberry! Watching him profess his solicitude for the poor and the lame and the halt reminds the theatergoer that here is one of the great greasepaint moralizers of all time.

The illustrious Speaker acts as though the Reagan Administration is thrusting orphans and cripples into the cold. He laments the cruelties of the Administration's budget cuts. He does not reveal that the budget for fiscal 1983 is \$38.1 billion more rotund than fiscal 1982; or that the

budget for fiscal 1982 will probably expand in real terms by at least five percent over fiscal 1981 with the growth in non-defense spending roaring along, gouging a record 17.4 percent of the GNP, up from 15.9 percent in fiscal 1979.

He does not reveal that the Reagan Administration is cutting only the rate of budgetary growth that he and his spendthrift colleagues built into the budget by passing idiotic laws that enjoin the government to pay more and higher benefits whether the funds are available or not and whether the taxpayers have approved or not.

He pretends to be totally ignorant of one of Washington's most appalling realities, namely, that the growth of the federal budget is wholly out of control, insulated from the will of the American people by a praetorian guard of liberal Democrats

and old-time pork-barrelers who have no intention of cutting it back.

With great flourishes of emotion the illustrious Speaker is explaining how he has saved the little fellow from the Reagan budget cuts. He is not explaining that he also wants to deny the little fellow the pleasure of the third round of the Reagan tax cuts. Even with the present round of Reagan tax cuts, taxes went up 15.8 percent in the last calendar year. But the Speaker wants more tax revenue and he wants it from the very same little fellow whom he claims to protect.

Bear in mind that the Democratic leadership through the Brodhead Amendment has already lowered the top tax rate on the highest personal incomes from 70 percent to 50 percent. As Congressman Jack Kemp is pointing out, the Reagan cuts will merely preserve a tax cut for the

ordinary American, the fellow earning less than \$60,000. Only a player of consummate skill could claim as the Speaker did last month that this final Reagan tax cut is a "program of giving billion-dollar tax cuts to the rich."

Yet the Speaker's most breathtaking bit of theater is his insistence

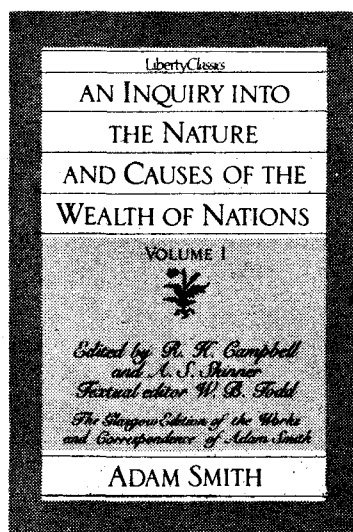
that he wanted a budget compromise. Actually, all the accommodation came from the President, backing off on his tax policies and his budget cuts and his defense increases. The entitlement programs were hardly touched. All the Hon. O'Neill will agree to is more spending and heavier taxes. If the President does not yield, the Speaker will gladly sit back and watch the economy stumble

along until the fall elections when he will blame the economy on the President and hope for more Democratic seats. Then he can return to his age-old policies of inflating the currency, buying off more votes, and allowing taxes to rise.

Nonetheless, the Speaker did do the Republic some good last month.

By sticking so stubbornly to his profligate policies of the past he saved the President from doing dreadful damage to the Administration's own policies. The President's willingness to do violence to his own program of tax and budget cuts was an amazing spectacle. It showed how deeply influenced he now is by the pragmatic Republicans. They believe they can stay in power by ingratiating themselves with the big spenders. The Speaker, once again, proved them wrong. □

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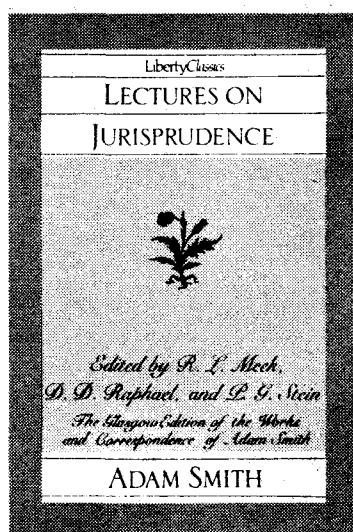
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SEABED SOCIALISM

In reviewing the amazing proceedings of the Law of the Sea Conference that the Reagan Administration scotched in late April, one thought continued to nudge forward in my mind, to wit: By common consent we are coming to the end of the postwar period. We are entering a new era. Its qualities are as yet unsettled, but the postwar period has had it.

The belief in the authority of the great powers that existed at the birth of the United Nations is no more. The norms and formalities of diplomacy that those nations established in the world are frayed or ignored. Of the great powers only the USSR acts as though it had national interests, or as though it were a power of greater magnitude than, say, South Yemen. The rest participate in farce, the creation of a world order in which the United States will be the equal of Senegal, the world's fifth leading producer of groundnuts—unshelled. Do the diplomats believe this? Over at our State Department I believe that many of them do.

At the Law of the Sea Conference they were solemnly in the process of negotiating away still more American rights. Driven by the Third World's assertion that the world's resources are "the common heritage of mankind," they were about to sign away the right to explore and to mine resources of the high seas without Third World interference. During the postwar period there was no problem in this domain. Deep-seabed mining, though still in a fetal stage, was a high sea right commensurate with catching tuna. But, as is characteristic of international diplomacy as we depart the postwar period, diplomats, stupefied by the ideological pronouncements of a few backward nations, create problems where none had theretofore existed.

In this case a few ragamuffin nations, some snoozing in the last
(continued on page 41)



• May . . . the month passed with no nuclear war reported! Oh glory! Oh grandeur! Oh blessed relief! The little birds twirp twirp in the trees above. The worried Profs. of romance languages and their assorted allies wave placards and petitions below. The Spaceship Earth has slipped through another month. Does this happy pass irk Ronald Reagan? Will he redouble his efforts on behalf of nuclear holocaust and the destruction of wildlife next month? It is a possibility that your average peace demonstrator cannot rule out. He would be much relieved if someone else were in the White House, someone with the eyes of a baby seal, someone you could believe in.

• Early in the month the fiend Reagan announced a two-stage plan in which the United States and the Soviet Union might reduce their nuclear arsenals by a third. Unrest broke out anew in Poland. And Mr. Claus von Bülow was sentenced to 30 years in the hoosegow for trying to murder his wife twice. The *Journal of the American Medical Association* continued its fanatical campaign against jogging by reporting that middle-aged men are seven times more likely to drop dead while jogging than while sitting in a chair. Speaking at the National Conference on Sexual Victimization of Children, poet and singer Mr. Rod McKuen stated that he had been sexually abused in his early years by an aunt and uncle team. About precise details Mr. McKuen remained coy, but he believes that "the only means of prevention . . . is everybody who cares about anyone must get involved." Kids could be headed for difficult times.

• The anti-nuke poetry is fevering Japan where crowds of Admiral Yamamoto's descendants held an enormous "die-in" to demonstrate one of the more obvious points of the anti-nuke credenda. In London, the Duke of Edinburgh notified a somewhat downbeat meeting of the Council for Environmental Conservation that the British task force in the Falklands would probably be killing a sizable number of whales, due to naval sonar's inability to discern significant differences between cetaceans and hostile submarines—though hostile submarines consume considerably less sea life, discharge much less

solid waste, and in all probability are less of a threat to the world's oceans.

• In related matters, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to animals publicly deplored a London pest control firm's plan to exterminate wild cats inhabiting subways near North Middlesex Hospital where they have disturbed the chaste thoughts of many local ladies by surreptitiously rubbing their furry sides against the ladies' legs. Rhode Island's Supreme Court upheld a lower court conviction of Mr. James F. Tweedie who finished off a stray cat by cooking it in a microwave oven. And the anti-vivisection movement in Britain and America continues to gain adepts: In London stalwarts of the Animal Liberation Front—all from the species *Homo sapiens*—freed a large number of rabbits from the death row of a laboratory; and the actress Miss Julie Christie has completed work on the British-American production of *The Animal Film*, castigating the "deadness of the mind that can commit these atrocities [medical experiments on animals] without blinking, every day, exactly in the same way they are being committed, for example, in El Salvador today."

• Meanwhile in Madison, Wisconsin two aborted fetuses greatly embarrassed the medical corps at Madison General Hospital by refusing to go quietly into their medically prescribed garbage bag. Actually, one, a 26-week-old girl, lived for 27½ hours; the other, a 24-week-old girl, lived 9½ hours. In Michigan, Truesdale Chapels, Inc., an esteemed mortuary accused of mistakenly cremating the corpse of Daniel P. Sullivan, reached a \$75,000 court settlement with Mr. Sullivan's heirs and assigns. Mr. Jeffrey G. Janor of Cleveland Heights, Ohio, was fined \$50 for publicly bastinadoing his automobile with a tire iron. And those 17,000 fetuses and embryos discovered earlier this year in a repossessed shipping container in California will be commemorated in a religious service endorsed late in the month by President Reagan.

• In church news, the Rev. Sun Myung Moon, oracle and chief executive officer of the Unification Church, Inc., with branches in most major American cities and all plush sub-

urbs, was found guilty in Manhattan of conspiring to defraud the government and of filing false income-tax returns. On May 12, the Rev. Billy Graham brought his trip to the USSR to a sublime culmination by speaking in tongues, to wit: the mysterious tongues of the Soviet Politburo. Surrounded by agape newsmen, the Hayseed Pope declared that he had seen no evidence of religious repression in the Marxist-Leninist dream-come-true state and that the churches he had visited were at least as full as those in his hometown—though surely back home the Rev. Graham's flock is not so heavily armed or so well-equipped with pocket transmitters. The Roman Pope, John Paul II, visited the Portuguese shrine of Fatima despite a zealot's attempt to impale him on a large knife, and late in the month the Pontiff visited England in a blue and yellow helicopter. Meanwhile in Salamanca, Spain, hundreds of villagers nearly lynched a self-proclaimed anti-pope, the Rev. Pope Clement, after roughing up eight of his "bishops." Finally, woebegone liberals were given a brief little pick-me-up when a bolt of lightning killed Sinbad, a horse ridden by our President in the TV series "Death Valley Days."

• By uncovering irrefragable evidence that Miss Ann Landers has been recycling columns from the mid-1960s, investigative reporter Mrs. Barbara Sancken of the *Daily Leader* of Pontiac, Illinois has made a powerful bid for a Pulitzer prize. The news slammed many of Miss Landers's 70 million readers into the mulligrubs, but conservatives were quick to observe that the enduring interest of the columns is proof of the existence of those eternal verities about which Dr. Russell Kirk has written so rhapsodically and repeatedly. Mr. Jack "Treetop" Strauss has won the World Series of Poker in Las Vegas, and Iranian Revolutionary Guards beat hell out of a Teheran dentist when they caught the rascal furtively stuffing women's colored underwear into the trunk of his American-made automobile.

• Evidence that Soviet fashion-designers are really serious about toppling Paris as the world's fashion capital was provided in prodigious abundance at an exhibit in elegant

Smolensk. There a display of folk costumes featured a woman's dress made wholly from the air bladder of a giant fish. In Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, most of those 15 million insect larvae taken hostage by disgruntled students perished when the dunderheads failed to maintain the proper temperature. A former St. Louis member of the Guardian Angels youth patrol was convicted of lewd and lascivious behavior, though he still denies that he ever lowered his pants and exposed his private parts except to attend to exigent bodily functions and then only in privacy—"I got better taste than to do something like that," declared Mr. Burnie M. Hill, 24.

• On the education front, deputy Pennsylvania education secretary Mr. Ronald H. Lewis, who was recently nominated to become New Jersey's education commissioner is denying charges that his "doctoral study" was a bouillabaisse of plagiarisms. Acknowledging that his "study" contained long passages from other books without proper citation or even quotation marks, the rising educator explained that his study at Fairleigh Dickinson University had been a "flexible" and "experimental" doctoral program. According to the *Newark Star Ledger*, 66 of the 121 pages of Mr. Lewis's experimental and flexible study contained material copied verbatim and without citation. Warfare continues in the Chicano Studies Department of California State University, Los Angeles where faculty in-fighting over jobs and tenure has been accompanied by sabotaged automobiles, burnt-out garages, and other violent acts. At the center of the storm is a faculty-member Bert Corona, 63, a Marxist-Leninist militant with no college degree but the majority of the Chicano dons behind him. Finally, laxness continues to spread throughout academe as can be seen by the decision of Professor Barry Singer of California State University at Long Beach. Professor Singer has decided to delete from his popular course, "Psychology of Sex," homework options of engaging in homosexual, group, or extramarital sex—though the Prof. still believes such lucubrations "can be a very powerful growth and learning experience."

—RET



Peter W. Rodman

NORMAN PODHORETZ AND THE VIETNAM WAR

Morality had everything to do with it.

The Vietnam war, in retrospect, can be judged on three levels: the strategic, the practical, and the moral.

The strategic rationale for American involvement in Indochina was, at bottom, containment of what was seen as a new form of Communist military challenge. In an era of American nuclear superiority, the new danger was limited wars and revolutionary insurgencies. Vietnam was considered a test case of Communist—particularly Chinese Communist—theories of revolutionary guerrilla warfare which had global implications and had to be blocked if aggression was not to be encouraged.

This strategic case for the war, hindsight suggests, was seriously wrong. Soon after President Johnson's major escalation of American involvement in 1965, China found itself convulsed for nearly a decade in the internal chaos of the Cultural Revolution. Even Lin Biao's manifesto of September 1965 on "people's war," with its menacing pronouncements on global guerrilla warfare, told the North Vietnamese essentially that China would give them moral but not significant material support. Within a few years, moreover, heavy-handed Soviet military pressures against China forced China to call off its revolutionary militance and turn, in some desperation, to the West. The North Vietnamese assault on the South turns out, in retrospect, to have been mainly the reflection of Hanoi's 30-year drive for regional hegemony, not a Soviet or Chinese global campaign. Whether this was a geopolitical menace justifying a massive military intervention by the United States must be seriously doubted.

On the practical level, the Vietnam war was also found wanting. This in my view was its undoing in the American domestic context. After three years of exertion,

inconclusive in result, all optimistic visions of how well we were doing were shattered by the 1968 Tet offensive. The Johnson Administration was absolutely correct that the offensive was a military disaster for the Viet Cong. Nevertheless, it was a shock to Americans and deeply disillusioning; if such an assault could be mounted after



three years of American sacrifice, we did not seem to be close to succeeding in our objectives. The judgment was not wrong.

The great irony of Vietnam is that the one level on which the doomed effort seems vindicated by events is the moral one—the very level on which the war was so virulently attacked by the intellectuals, journalists, and political leaders of the antiwar movement. One of the more seductive arguments of the war's critics, particularly in the last few years before the final debacle, was that to cease support for the non-Communist governments and let the war end was the most humane thing we could possibly do for the peoples of Indochina. This turned out to be totally, disastrously, sickeningly wrong.

The "re-education" camps of the Indochinese Gulag, the boat people, the Khmer Rouge genocide, the lethal chemical warfare against Lao tribesmen and Cambodian villagers—they leave no room for ambiguity on this score. The moral results of defeat were not "inconclusive." Every American President who justified our commitment to Indochina, indeed our whole foreign policy, in terms of the brutality of the Communist system was proved, in the end, correct.

The irony that the war is perhaps most defensible on precisely the flank most viciously attacked is the main theme of Norman Podhoretz's new book, *Why We Were in Vietnam*.^{*} We were trying to save the peoples of Indochina from a tyranny which they rightly abhorred and which we had every right to help them resist. Podhoretz indeed criticizes most of the American administrations that conducted the war for not making the moral case forcefully enough; they relied instead, he feels, on strategic or geopolitical arguments which were less compelling to the

^{*}Simon and Schuster, \$13.50.

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American public, and thereby abandoned the moral field to the antiwar critics. It is an intriguing point indicative of the fresh thinking that Podhoretz offers and that is clearly needed. After a decade, the Vietnam experience is still a topic of discourse dominated all too much by a bizarre combination of amnesia, clichés, smoldering emotions, and vested interest on the part of the legion of antiwar intellectuals who have a large personal stake in the notion that they performed a moral duty in helping drive America out of Indochina. No wonder Podhoretz's book has struck a raw nerve in some quarters.

In spite of what one might conclude from some of the savage attacks on it, the book is not a polemic at all. It is perhaps the best short account of the main events and decisions that engaged us in Vietnam and one of the most lucid short analyses of the whole enterprise. Podhoretz, editor of the neoconservative journal *Commentary*, draws skillfully on the key sources: the Pentagon Papers, memoirs of central figures, and some of the best of the growing body of research and interpretation (Leslie Gelb and Richard Betts, Guenter Lewy, "Cincinnatus," Peter Braestrup, Martin Herz, and others). Nor is it a mindless defense of the war (as some reviewers have charged): Podhoretz is critical of almost every administration from Eisenhower to Nixon for military and political misjudgments regarding the war. He does not believe the war could have been won; even had major decisions been made differently, he is convinced the effort was beyond the physical, intellectual, and psychological capacity of the United States to sustain. Whether one agrees with this or not (I am not sure I do), it ought to lend some credibility to his position: He is a skeptic on the war, who opposed it while it was going on, but he is determined to lay to rest the malign lie that it was evidence of the gross immorality of United States foreign policy. To acknowledge the strategic and practical errors of Vietnam is only to begin the process of historical assessment.

Why did we go in? Why did we stay in? Why did we withdraw? These are the questions with which Podhoretz begins his analysis.

He traces our entry into Vietnam to the philosophy of containment of global Communism, memories of Munich, the belief that America had a duty to defend freedom against tyranny, and the conviction that aggression against a small country could not be allowed to succeed. It was an expression of the classic postwar American idealism and sense of world responsibility; it was a set of beliefs shared by both political parties. The Eisenhower Administration extended military and economic aid—as well as pressures on Ngo Dinh Diem for internal reform. Vietnam was to be a "proving ground for democracy in

Asia," stated Senator John F. Kennedy in a rousing pro-Diem speech on June 1, 1956, a speech which some of Kennedy's liberal colleagues do not go out of their way to call attention to, these days.

Kennedy as President did not question the strategic or moral importance of preventing a North Vietnamese takeover of South Vietnam. There were debates within the Kennedy Administration, to be sure, about whether to give greater or lesser emphasis to political reform as part of the military effort—the "political" course implying, as Podhoretz points out, a far more extensive form of intervention and involvement in South Vietnam's affairs—but the willingness to abandon Vietnam to the Communists was not as apparent in the Kennedy White House as Arthur Schlesinger, Theodore Sorensen, and others would later claim. Kennedy's problem was that he wanted to avoid both the loss of Vietnam and a major land war in Asia; he compromised, sending 16,000 American combat advisers. It was neither inadvertence nor a case of being pushed into the "quagmire" by a deceitful Pentagon, as some theories have it; it was an attempt, says Podhoretz, to "accomplish a very large objective . . . on the cheap."

Lyndon Johnson inherited the Kennedy commitment and the Kennedy dilemma. Podhoretz points out that evidence in the Pentagon Papers clears Johnson of the charges of deceiving the American public

both at the time of the Gulf of Tonkin incident and at the time of his campaign promises not to send American boys to fight in Asian wars. Intercepts show that the North Vietnamese gunboat attacks in the Tonkin Gulf were genuine and unprovoked; the bombing campaign over North Vietnam was decided upon only in early 1965, and was undertaken in the hope that it would *preclude* the need for a major commitment of American combat troops. Johnson chose not to call up reserves or increase the draft or go on a war footing or declare a state of emergency; he did not want to stir up a war fever or undercut his Great Society economic and social programs. Podhoretz writes:

Johnson, then, was trying to save Vietnam on the political cheap—going in politically slow and small—just as Kennedy had done in trying to save it on the military cheap. . . . [W]hereas Kennedy had mainly failed to take the measure of the obstacles within Vietnam to a successful intervention, Johnson failed to see that the conditions for a successful prosecution of the war were lacking in the United States.

Podhoretz faults Johnson for thereby relinquishing the field of debate to the steadily growing legion of antiwar critics whose charges that the war was unjust were not answered by a sustained moral case for the American intervention. Not only were the American military forced to operate under unprecedented political



restraints, but the debate at home was increasingly driven by radicals who undermined the public's sense of the war's legitimacy. Podhoretz feels that Tet 1968 only ignited a disaffection that was already latent.

Thus in 1968, the platforms of both political parties pledged efforts for a negotiated settlement of the war. And Richard Nixon, inheriting the war (and 550,000 American troops in Vietnam) in January 1969, had to struggle for a strategy of withdrawal that both ended the American involvement and preserved South Vietnam's chances of survival.

Nixon resorted to "Vietnamization" of the war—building up South Vietnamese military capacities—and an effort to negotiate a compromise settlement in secret talks between national security adviser Henry Kissinger and North Vietnamese Politburo strategist Le Duc Tho. Harassed by an antiwar Congress and media (and by virulent public demonstrations whenever some sporadic forceful military action was taken over the four-year period of gradual troop withdrawals), Nixon and Kissinger eventually bargained the North Vietnamese down to a precarious compromise that withdrew American forces but left the South Vietnamese government intact. Backed by continuing American military and economic aid, and by the threat of possible American reintervention with air power, the South Vietnamese were left either to neutralize the North Vietnamese army or to reach some political compromise. The new triangular diplomacy among the superpowers—the U.S., USSR, and China—was another element in the hopeful strategy. Podhoretz concludes:

If, then, Kennedy tried to apply containment in Vietnam on the military cheap, and Johnson tried to make it work on the political cheap, Nixon tried to salvage it on the strategic cheap.

In the end, the Congress cut off all possibility of American reintervention and cut back the American program of economic and military aid. Watergate doomed not only Nixon but also his hopes of keeping South Vietnam alive.

This is the essence of the analysis that Podhoretz painstakingly sketches, and it is eminently sensible. There is room for disagreement on points here and there. Podhoretz is a great believer in the power of ideas, but it is not self-evident that greater exertion on the ideological plane would have eased Johnson's problems, or Nixon's. Podhoretz feels that the Tet offensive had an impact only because radical critics had already succeeded in de-legitimizing the war. As I have suggested earlier, I would put more weight on the shattering of optimistic expectations and growing doubts about the practical efficacy of U.S. policy. (Podhoretz himself considers the war unwinnable; at Tet, the American public seems to have reached the same conclusion.) I also think he overrates the degree of Nixon's reliance on Russia and China to contain North Vietnam; more reliance was placed on adequate military and economic aid to South Vietnam and the threat of American bombing to deter major North Vietnamese violations of the Paris Agreement. But these are subordinate issues. Podhoretz's is a serious and thoughtful effort.

Those who attacked the war for its gross criminality, and still maintain this view, are not happy with the book at all. Too many people seem to have a stake in the thesis that it was all the doing of a handful of evil American leaders. This, of course, is an intellectual cop-out; it avoids the need for thought and relieves everyone else of any responsibility at every stage. Pod-

horetz is not afraid to take them on. He quotes extensively from the more outrageous utterances of radical critics—erroneous charges of war crimes, naive praise for North Vietnamese humanitarianism, tendentious attacks not only on the war effort but on the foundations of American society and political freedom. The desperate need on the Left to salvage the purity of the "socialist" idea and deny its perversions; the role of some who served in administrations that got us into Vietnam who then applied their ingenuity to shift responsibility elsewhere; indeed the antiwar movement's denial of its own role in forcing American withdrawal and thereby its own share of responsibility for the consequences of the outcome—these various phenomena of our recent cultural life are dissected with what is for Podhoretz admirable restraint. The Left has fought back with its customary sense of fair play, assigning as book reviewers such stalwarts as Arthur Schlesinger (*Harper's*) and Theodore Draper (*New Republic*) who are to one degree or another targets of Podhoretz's criticism.

Podhoretz made a tactical error in neglecting to acknowledge his own role during the period. This uncharacteristic modesty has enabled some of his reviewers to attack him on the ad hominem ground that his moral strictures against antiwar agitation must apply also to his own. *Commentary* was indeed a vocal and insistent critic of the war, and Podhoretz in his signed editorial columns reached some emotional heights of stridency especially in 1970 and 1971, after Cambodia. In July 1970 he denounced the "wanton American involvement in Vietnam" and in May 1971 he found himself "unhappily moving to the side of those who would prefer . . . an American defeat."

Podhoretz's defenders point out that his 1979 memoir, *Breaking Ranks*, is an acknowledgment and account of his shift from the mainstream Left to neoconservatism, marked to a great extent by renunciation of his earlier views on Vietnam. *Breaking Ranks* indeed traces this conversion, but it is rather less explicit in describing the earlier, renounced positions than it is in describing how the world looks from the new enlightened vantage point of the convert. In any case, in fairness to Podhoretz, *Commentary's* antiwar writing during the period was always tempered by an explicit rejection of the rabid anti-Americanism of the radical fringe. Noam Chomsky and the *New York Review of Books* were frequently chastised; a book review in the July 1969 *Commentary* took Mary McCarthy and Susan Sontag to task for damaging the antiwar cause by seeming not only to oppose the war but to support North Vietnamese Communism.

Thus, the "revelation" of Podhoretz's own antiwar position is a mere debating point. A few pages in the new book acknowledging his earlier opposition to the war would have been prudent and would



probably have enhanced the credibility of his arguments. But it is absurd to think the reviewers would have altered their attack in any other significant respect.

Theodore Draper, for example, has denounced the book viciously as an attempt to propagate a stab-in-the-back theory, a McCarthyite scapegoating of the antiwar movement. The charge is ludicrous. One of the striking things about the Vietnam debacle was the complete absence of the bitter right-wing recriminations that many had predicted as the inevitable consequence of an American humiliation. The administration in office was struck with a failed policy on its hands, and conservatives were confused and demoralized; nor was there gloating on the Left, once the atrocity stories started pouring out of all the countries of Indochina almost immediately. Thus for a time there was a cessation of debate, a kind of brooding quietude and desire to forget, which in the circumstances was probably healthy.

It was the *Left* that first reopened the debate over Vietnam, by a kind of preemptive strike to deflect elsewhere the responsibility for the horrors more evident every day in the lands we had left behind. Thus the egregious William Shawcross; thus the annual Christmas lamentations by Anthony Lewis commemorating the 1972 Christmas bombing; thus the more recent attempts by Sydney Schanberg in the *New York Times* to savage Thomas Enders, once deputy chief of mission in Phnom Penh and now a chief architect of our policies in Central America. Only gradually have advocates of a contrary position come forward attempting to shed a different light on our recent history. And, as in the case of Podhoretz, the Left has banded together in response to greet them all with the scholarly objectivity of a gang rape.

The issue, of course, is not just personal reputations or an abstract academic debate over the past. The strategic impact of our defeat in Vietnam was enormous, pervasive, and lasting. Arthur Schlesinger in his review of Podhoretz continues to dismiss this concern as "dumb." What other dominoes fell, he asks, aside from the two neighboring countries of Indochina? Thailand did not fall; the other dominoes of Southeast Asia still stand. He has missed the point profoundly. Even on the local level, Thailand's survival is probably more a result of Chinese policy: China (as well as the U.S.) has given Thailand some military assistance and the Chinese have counterbalanced Vietnamese power by their assault in 1979 to "teach Vietnam a lesson." The United States is no longer a major factor in the regional affairs of Southeast Asia. This has political and moral consequences—evident, for example, in the marginal chances for survival of the Son Sann "third force" in Cambodia, the only democratic alternative to the Vietnamese occupiers, the erratic Siha-

nouk, and the despicable Khmer Rouge.

The greatest proof of the domino theory, however, is not in Southeast Asia but at home. The consequences of defeat were brilliantly described in the July 1975 *Foreign Affairs* by, ironically, antiwar foreign policy analyst Earl C. Ravenal, a stalwart of the Institute for Policy Studies and other counterculture think tanks. The most important domino that fell, said Ravenal, was the American domestic system. The American public, he wrote, was so deeply traumatized by the Vietnam failure that it would shun all future commitments out of fear of repeating the discredited Vietnam adventure:

What frustrated the American effort at home was the eventual resistance of Congress, and behind Congress, the public, to prolonging sacrifices and risks of lives and resources in situations that were not immediately compelling or clear. Thus, it is not Vietnam directly that will inhibit American responses in the future. It is the structural similarity of future challenges, as perceived by the American people and their representatives, that will be likely to evoke the same responses or obstructions, hence the same ultimately effective constraints on American power. There is no reason to think that, after Vietnam, these factors will cease to operate. The reliability of the American response is the first casualty of Vietnam, and particularly of the end game there.

Therefore, foreign leaders would draw the obvious—and accurate—conclusion that American commitments now lacked

credibility. The United States would be less of a factor anywhere. This would be inevitably reflected in the behavior of all other nations, friend and foe, weakening the balance of power globally. Ravenal, a dove, accepted this outcome because he favored a significant retrenchment of the American role. But he ridiculed those other liberal doves who salved their consciences by pretending that the American defeat had no consequences.

Singapore Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew made the same point in an eloquent toast at a White House dinner in May 1975. Lee, a friend of this country, tried to make the point positively, hoping against hope that the damage could be repaired:

No better service can be done to non-Communist governments the world over than to restore confidence that the American Government can and will act swiftly and in tandem between the Administration and Congress in any case of open aggression. . . . If the President and Congress can speak in one voice on basic issues of foreign policy and in clear and unmistakable terms, then friends and allies will know where they stand. . . .

Thus do the strategic and the moral dimensions of Vietnam come together. If the strategic rationale for entry into Vietnam was faulty, there can no longer be doubt of the strategic disaster—once America was committed—of an outcome that was an unambiguous American defeat. The Nixon



and Ford Administrations were willing to disengage American forces and negotiate a settlement but foresaw profound psychological consequences from a total American capitulation or collapse. From the Angola debate in 1975 to the Central America debate of 1981-82, the cry of "another Vietnam" has stifled serious public discourse, paralyzing the American response and proving these predictions devastatingly correct. Indeed, this may have been one reason why the more radical elements of the antiwar movement pressed for a total debacle in Indochina, even after the Paris Agreement: If the enterprise were totally discredited, if the American people

could salvage no shred of pride or achievement from the ordeal, then American policy would be paralyzed for a generation.

If America is ever to recover its world position, one crucial first step will be to come to terms with the moral truth about Vietnam. For the American people to accept that the effort there had a morally defensible purpose is to preserve their faith in the continuing validity of their country's role as defender of democracy and opponent of Communist tyranny. There may be lessons to be learned from failure, but there need not be shame. The real moral premise of the radical antiwar position is that the crime would

have been greater if we had succeeded.

The debate over the morality of Vietnam is therefore not a debate over America's past but over America's future. Do we still care about the fate of freedom in the world? Or do we accept that *American* power is the source of evil and American paralysis the last best hope of mankind? I have enough confidence in the American public to believe that they never accepted the canard of American immorality. In our higher intellectual circles, however, the struggle to suppress, or salvage, America's sense of honor is still continuing.

Judging by the response to Podhoretz's book, I am not optimistic. □

Andy Stark

CAFFEINE IN THE AMERICAN BLOODSTREAM: THE POLITICS OF DISHARMONY

Samuel P. Huntington on America's recurring moods.

Many of us are by now familiar with the following vignette of American life—a man, let us call him George, and his wife, say, Jane, are drinking coffee and chatting amiably about the little things which make up their daily existence. Suddenly, there is a knock on the door. Jane answers it, and in strides Robert, a sunnily comported older man and a figure held in obvious regard by George and Jane, come to check on the state of their domesticity.

At the very moment the old fellow enters the room, a look of strain washes over George's face; cynics cannot help but associate George's sudden nausea with the contemporaneous arrival of the old man, but George quickly gives the lie to that diagnosis, barking with inappropriate irritability that he is late for the theater. As George rarely barks, Jane and Robert, concerned, immediately come toward him, and a curious thing then happens. Although George has plainly explained that he is late, both Jane and Robert refuse to accept that as the cause of George's irritability. Jane declares that George's outburst is only accountable by other factors—his workload at the office and mortgage payments coming due. At this point, Robert demurs, offering a third explanation: George has barked because there is too

much caffeine in his coffee. Robert's account wins over George and Jane, a decaffeinated coffee is quickly substituted for the villain, Robert comes by the next day to check in, George does not evince nausea upon Robert's arrival or at any other time; it was indeed the caffeine.

Samuel P. Huntington has recently



published a stimulating and original volume, *American Politics: The Politics of Disharmony*,* in which he essentially takes Robert's position, though on a different subject matter. Huntington's subject matter is the kinetics of American reform; in particular the four most noteworthy reform periods in American history: the Revolution, the Jacksonian era, the Progressive era, and the 1960s. In each eruption, Huntington notices, discontent and moral indignation were unhesitatingly expressed; authority, hierarchy, and specialization were traduced and questioned; hypocrisy, insincerity, and power were exposed and scorned; agitation, commotion, and excitement were aroused; and each reform was suffused with an anti-governmental spirit. Bereft of the calmness of methodical program, beset by the zeal of idealism, individuals leapt during such times from cause to cause, from petitions against flogging in the Navy (a pet peeve of Herman Melville's) to women's suffrage, without seeing any one through to the end. And neatly enough, Huntington's four periods are spaced at sixty-year intervals.

The common characteristics of the four epochs, as well as their historical reoccurrence, lead Huntington to speculate that the process of reform in American politics is a historical dynamic, not a rational response to the corruption, depredation, and abuse which arise willy-nilly in political

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*Harvard University Press, \$15.00.

and social affairs. In other words, it is the caffeine in the American bloodstream, not the eleventh-hour need to set aright political malfeasance, which gives rise to the national irritability. It is an attractive thesis, made more plausible if Huntington is correct in observing that corruption, depredation, and abuse always exist at a more or less constant level (George is always late for something, but he doesn't get all lathered about it every time) and that some explanation must be made for the periodic tizzy such commonplaces arouse (George is always drinking his evening coffee just before he explodes).

Huntington's explanation is a "consciousness cycle" in American history. It works like this: Americans have a political creed; its principal elements are constitutionalism, liberalism, democracy, egalitarianism, and individualism. Americans also have a set of political institutions—a President, a Congress, parties, bureaucracies, and political machines, but also corporations, universities, churches, hospitals, banks. Political and social reality being the recalcitrant it has always been, none of these institutions will ever succumb completely to the charms of the Creed. The President will behave unconstitutionally, bureaucracies will purée our rights, machines and parties will never be democratic from tip to toe, universities require *loci* of authority and hence can never be egalitarian, corporations trample individualism and nonconformity, and none of this can be averted.

Now at any given time, Huntington writes, we can believe more or less intensely in the tenets of the Creed, and perceive more or less clearly the inevitable gap between the ideals of the Creed and the performance of the institutions which are supposed to embody them. The interval during which Americans believe most fervently in the Creed and perceive most clearly the gap between its ideals and the reality is a period of reform *moralism*. Huntington calls such a time a "credal passion period." Soon enough, however, a weariness sets in; Americans can sustain a high level of moral indignation and earnestness for only so long; the intensity of belief wanes, but the perception of the gap remains lucid; this is a period of *cynicism*.

But cynicism too cannot be maintained—the dissonance between ideals and reality eventually becomes so psychologically debilitating that a fog mercifully descends over the clarity of American political perception. When combined with the already low level of feeling for the Creed, it turns Americans away from politics and toward *complacency*. Yet just as Americans cannot indefinitely remain at fever pitch, neither can they indefinitely postpone a reaffirmation of their political values; after a spell, they will patriotically resurrect their passion. In the process their patriotism will revive a belief that American institutions not only ought to be, but in fact are, the freest, most democratic

imaginable; the gap will remain hidden—this is *hypocrisy*. This brings us to the end. By now, fifty-five years or so have passed, and we are at the dawn of a new period of moralism.

There are two lessons to be drawn from this analysis; one we have already touched on, and that is the historical, as opposed to sociological or political, impetus of American reform movements. That is, these periods of housecleaning occur not as a result of politics as usual, nor do they automatically spring forth from exogenous, underlying social and economic changes such as a wave of prosperity that allows the idle mind to turn to thoughts of political reform, or the relative deprivation and sudden decline of a major social group, which then begins to demand satisfaction. These reform periods are not, in other words, motivated by the politics of interest or the sociology of groups, but by the dynamics of history. Borrowing a metaphor from Walter Lippmann, Huntington asks, "What happens at work to cause the husband to fly into a rage because his slippers are in the wrong place?"

The second lesson is that if these events are perpetual reoccurrences, then American reform takes its tenor not from the particular events to which it reacts, but from the first American revolution—no, not the one in the colonies of the 1770s, but the one in England in the 1640s—the Puritan Revolution. Huntington writes:

England had a Puritan revolution without creating a Puritan society; America created a Puritan society without enduring a Puritan revolution. . . . The Puritan Revolution was a unique event in English history, but it was also a prototypical event for American history. The anguish, the moralism, the reform conscience, the exhilaration of that revolution were manifested again and again on American soil . . .

Earlier, to enhance his picture of the American reformer, Huntington quotes

Richard Maxwell Brown: The reformer was a man who distrusted, exposed, and overturned every usage of power, a man "not content to let sleeping dogs lie." There is only one way to characterize a polity in which every sixty years or so men not only fly into a rage at their wives for misplacing their bedroom slippers, but also kick their sleeping dogs: American politics is the politics of domestic intranquility, it is the politics of disharmony.

The argument as presented invites us to undertake an odyssey to the source of our congenital disharmony. And since this disharmony is unique in world politics, a good point of departure might be the ways in which Americans think their politics, their history, to be one of a kind. We find two phenomena strikingly absent from American renditions of U.S. history which are at the heart of the greatest European national histories: teleology and ideology. To understand why Americans have done without these is to discover the sources of America's singular disharmony. But first we must understand what they've meant in European history.

Emile Durkheim once defined historical teleology as the "explanatory closure" between function and cause. To illustrate, consider Marx's statement that "the handmill gives you the feudal lord." The coming of the handmill, we presume, was prior to the feudal lord, and whether it filled an important technological function in its own time is beside the point. It is beside the point because the purpose of the handmill was to give rise to—to *cause*—a crucial personality in the march of history—the feudal lord. Conversely, while the feudal lord eminently served a historical *function* in the feudal world in which he thrived, his cause is to be found in a past era—the era of the invention of the handmill. ➔



Thus, the inventors of the handmill could not possibly have foreseen the historical force their creation was to unleash. They did not intend to bring about the feudal lord. Nor, it might be added, could the era to which the feudal lord was so crucial have summoned him into existence had he not already organically sprung from history. Necessity is not the mother of historical invention. This lack of human control over historical events is one of teleology's two cardinal characteristics. The other is suggested by the very root of the word in Greek—*telos*—which means goal or end. A teleological history is one in which the past serves the future.

But if teleology is the "explanatory closure" between cause and function, then ideology is the "explanatory closure" between cause and judgment. In this case, too, a modern "event"—let us say Joseph Schumpeter's version of late-nineteenth-century imperialism—has a cause in a distant era—the age of intense rivalry between powerful European monarchs. In contrast to the teleological view, Schumpeter holds that imperialism served no function, social or historical. By the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when imperialism matured, it was unnecessary for economic growth, useless for blowing off national aggression, totally without point for the great powers which indulged in it. In Schumpeter's view, imperialism was an atavism, an event that hung around too long, an affair which led not to the future but to a historical dead end (how unteleological can you get?).

Nevertheless, certain of its contemporaries judged imperialism favorably, because though it served no social or historical design, they deemed its perpetuation to be in their interest. However unwittingly, these individuals—the bashaws of the military and business worlds—

wove an ideology that justifies imperialism; they spun the myth that it was in fact functional. Such an ideology was known variously as "the white man's burden" or "modernization." In this way, an event with a distant cause came not to serve a function in a later era, but to be justified and judged favorably nonetheless.

Neither teleology nor ideology manages to escape the suspicion that it has malodorous origins. Teleology seems to arise when someone places small print between the lines of history, and then comes running to call our attention to the grand scheme he has discovered. Ideology arises in the case not of small print, but of conflict of interest—when an event, however pernicious to the interest of a nation as a whole, is adjudged by one class to be in its own interest. If it is a powerful class, then it may successfully con an entire age into passing favorable judgment on the event. Small print and conflict of interest are the white-collar misdemeanors committed by nations when they look at history, misdemeanors which are supposed to impel professional historians to blow their whistles. And, of course, one man's teleology is another man's ideology.

Most important, however, is that both teleology and ideology share the belief that men are the children of history and that history is not the child of men. A teleological history is one in which men exercise no conscious control, things work without them; an ideological history is one about which men exercise no independent critical judgment, their views are determined by their social berths. A teleological history is metaphysical, it transposes a pattern to history which the mere artifacts of history do not provide; an ideological history is anti-epistemological, it denies the ability of the mind to form a true picture of reality undistorted by social prejudices, personal

intrigues, class biases. Put this way, it is not surprising that although teleology and ideology have a monumental place in perspectives on European history, they are monumentally absent from perspectives on American history. Whether they are in fact absent is neither here nor there, the point is that Americans think them to be absent from their own history.

The American perspective is not hard to understand. American liberalism rests partially on the "Lockean" presumption that the human mind is a blank slate and that the ability of the individual to come independently to a correct political or social judgment is unimpaired. American democracy rests partially on the "Tocquevillean" observation that Americans believe their future is a blank slate, and that the ability of the American people to control their destiny apart from the obligation to satisfy historical laws is unburdened. Thus an American version of American history will have to do without teleology and ideology because both demean the ability of men to make and understand their own history.

And in fact, Americans do forbear from making use of teleology and ideology. On the absence of teleology in America, we have a recent offering from Gordon Wood:

We Americans, unlike many Europeans, have tended to see our history as the product of conscious intentions and political leadership. We have not usually thought of ourselves as caught up in large impersonal forces sweeping us along to destinies we have not chosen.

And on the topic of ideology and undistorted political vision in America, we have the following testimonial from Daniel Boorstin:

... the winds of dogma ... which during the last century and a half have blown violently over western Europe ... have not ruffled our political climate. ... While European politics has become a kaleidoscope, political life in the United States has seemed to remain a window through which we can look at the life envisaged by our patriarchs.

The perpetual unavailability of teleology and ideology to American history is often said to be the crux of "American uniqueness," the name given to our bewitching dissimilarity to European nations. But is this unavailability of teleology and ideology in any way the source of American disharmony? And, if so, what do Americans put in their place?

A good place to start is with Huntington's description of American history as the "ubiquitous politics of interest." The connotation is quite distinct from that of a teleological history, suggestive as the latter is of the congealment and demarcation and locked horns of estates and classes, and the clockwork aggrandizement and mobilization of nations and armies. Teleology ties events and glues individuals



together. But when the ubiquitous politics of interest is on the rise, the aroma wafting from history is very different. We can see this by looking at Europe itself during those rare times when teleology loses its grip; the hallmark of an absence of teleology is the falling apart, not the coming together, of classes. It conjures up the entropy and diffusion of estates, and images not of the mobilized but of the disbanded soldier, not of the enclosed but the uprooted peasant, not of the bound but the discharged rentier, as Michael Walzer suggested with one such age in mind. It is a time when men bereft of any class or group allegiance form a protean whirligig of interests and desires, colluding one minute and competing the next, as Burke and Tocqueville wrote with another such age in mind. It is a time when the ubiquitous politics of interest is on the rise.

It is this latter form of politics which constitutes the very marrow of American history. This is not surprising, since the politics of interest sits astride that central American canon, individualism. American individualism is in fact a bipartite canon, holding that individuals are flexible enough to belong to many interest groups—religious, economic, political—yet strong enough not to have need of continual collaboration with others in order to realize their interests.

There is of course another quintessentially American view of history. This is a view not of the mainstream, but of the American reformer and the American extremist, those two long-time commentators who share so much, from the belief that to expose evil is to destroy it to its corollary that evil results from bad men, not bad logicians. The reformer and the extremist see not a kaleidoscope of recombinant interests, but a roving band of conspirators. Despite this difference, a conspiracy theory is also anti-teleological, and hence *prima facie* American. It posits that men come together and act for reasons of their own, not to play out distant historical "causes." And it maintains that what men do is not necessarily in any way "functional" for history, though sometimes a historical function is served after the fact. The men who created the Union Pacific Railroad are illustrative. The "steam engine did not give you the Credit Mobilier"; rather, the men who built the railroad acted for reasons of their own—avarice, rapaciousness, cupidity, to name but three. And, as Robert Fogel has argued, the railroad was emphatically not "functional"—cost-effective—when built, it simply had a fortuitously functional by-product: It allowed midwestern industry to take off.

American history is thus seen by Americans as an interlocking helix of interests, not as the slow grinding of teleology. Now we must ask: How do Americans judge their history in a land of no ideology? Huntington answered this question: They do so within the tradition of

the Puritan Revolution of the seventeenth century. Paradoxically, then, while Americans live their history according to their own (venal, biased) interests, they *judge* their history according to a telos. The European image is, by and large, just the reverse. In an intriguing way, the American mode of *judging* history hearkens back to the European way of *explaining* history. And this, of course, is the source of American political disharmony. Our politics is in the present, but our reform motif is in the past and the future (Huntington's moral cycles); in Europe, history connects past and future, but is judged according to the interests of the present.

Huntington captures the American case strikingly when he writes that in America, history and progress are taking us further and further apart: The politics of interest, and, indeed, of the national interest in a dangerous world, requires government to imbibe more and more social authority in both senses of the word—as ruler and as expert. Indeed, it may require government to take over authority in a third sense—as the author of history. But progress—reform—in America is ineradicably rooted in Puritan opposition to government, hierarchy, expertise, secrecy, in short, in all those things of which our politics of interest is coming to demand more and more from government. If only Americans judged, certified, or reformed history according to ideologies arising from their interests, or if only Americans possessed a teleology which would legitimate growing governmental power as serving our national destiny in the manner of nineteenth-century European state-building, then we would have no disharmony.

Ideology, if we had it, would serve a further purpose, to coagulate interests and cool down history. As Tocqueville wrote:

No longer [in America] do ideas, but interests only, form the links between men, and it would seem that human opinions were no more than a

sort of mental dust open to the wind on every side and unable to come together and take shape.

Not only would ideology serve to moderate the combustion of reform in credal passion periods, it would also serve to keep the embers of reform aglow in the chilly off-season. As Constant wrote, ideology—or opinion—forces individuals to rise above their own interests to embrace it; it compels men, if they wish to collude or ally politically, to give an account of their interests that will satisfy a public program. True, this may be hypocrisy, but at least it is hypocrisy unexposed and hence somewhat effective in reaching its ostensible goal. By contrast, a moralistic revolutionary form of judgmentalism, when it crops up during the sixty-year intervals, is often scorned as hypocrisy exposed. In the Gilded Age, arch-gonif Roscoe Conkling sneered at the Puritan-style reformer, accusing him of fraudulently affecting altruism when in reality he was a graspy man (just like Conkling, Roscoe was big enough to concede) with his own interests, like everybody else. If only the Puritan reformer were a little more ideological and a little less revolutionary, American history would be a little more even-keeled.

Huntington's Puritan, we recall, is civilly disobedient; he is seething, rash, and impetuous, not practical; a true zealot and a hater of hypocrisy, a public spokesman for social change and a sworn enemy of insincerity; and an absolutist of the first magnitude—slavery has to be abolished here and now and that's all there is to it. But there is an opposite image of the Puritan, cast up in Michael Walzer's *Revolution of the Saints*, a beautifully written book on Calvinism whose historical understanding Huntington sometimes marshals for his own case. Walzer's Puritan preaches obedience and practical-



ity; to the extent that he is a zealot, he is a man of "hypocritical zeal"; a man permitted to lust only in his heart for social change, and taught to brook no public displays of discontent, hence an insincere man; and an incrementalist, not an absolutist—if usury cannot be abolished, we'll just have to do the best we can. We now have an ambiguity: If the American reformer is rooted in Puritan England, what does that say about his character? If he is a programmatic ideologue, not a passionate firebrand, if he is eager to create a new future, not nostalgic for an increasingly impossible past, then he will blend much more harmoniously with the ubiquitous politics of interest, and progress and history can commence a modest rapprochement.

Perhaps the reality is that over the past two hundred years, Huntington's Puritan has evolved into Walzer's Puritan. Daniel Boorstin has written that the custodians of Puritanism in America gradually substituted pride for providence, "is" for "ought," and experience for absolutism, as their hands slowly grasped the helm of state. If this is so, then, though the American reformer be Puritan, his particular brand of Puritanism is the sort which blends harmoniously with a politics of interest, increasingly approves of and uses government, and cools and crystallizes factions and interests.

Indeed, it seems exceedingly difficult to pick one or the other Puritan as a model of the American reformer. For Puritanism, trussed as it was by both conscience and work, was both revolutionary and ideological. American reform, as Tom Bottomore has observed, is at the same time log cabins and tenement clearing, parish democracy and big government. And this is not surprising since in some ways our history has been both teleological and conspiratorial. What can one expect in a political system one of whose Founding Fathers, John Adams, could at one moment swear his faith in the ability of men to discover "principles of political architecture" and at another without fanfare sadly remark on what a fool Condorcet was for thinking that Americans were high-powered social engineers? Surely, Huntington's prognosis contains a good deal of truth, but there is more, and there are contradictory signals. Cacophony, yes; disharmony, hard to say as yet for all the noise.

Finally, how do we account for the cycle Huntington has so ingeniously detected? It might well be that instead of a periodic variation in the intensity of our belief in the Creed, what varies is the extent to which we agree on its interpretations. The Creed is not a perfect mirror of American social aspiration, it is more like a prism which provides a spectrum of meanings conforming to the perceptions of the political spectrum. Whigs and Democrats, aboli-

tionists and oppressors, holders of personalty and holders of realty, McCarthy and his enemies, each adhered to a view of the American Creed glimpsed from a particular spot on the social terrain. At times, we have shared our interpretations of the Creed more than at others.

It might also be said that what is at issue is not so much the degree to which we perceive the gap between the Creed and political reality, but the sense we have of our own power to overcome it. In Arthur Miller's *American Clock*, we find unemployed Depression-era workers emasculated because each feels personally responsible for his failure to find remunerative work, and only gradually does he realize that his problem is social, not personal, and is shared by millions of others. In the writings of Betty Friedan, we find overworked 1950s housewives feminized because each feels personally guilty for her hatred of housework, and only slowly does she realize her problem is cultural, not psychological, and is also shared by millions. Regardless of one's political sympathies with the New Deal and the women's movement, they are emblematic of American reform movements in their evocation of the flowering sense of power that accompanies the self-consciousness of a social movement.

Huntington's cycle of moralism is historical, it focuses on cycles in national conscientiousness about ideals and acceptance of reality. The cycle I have suggested is much more sociological, focusing on the degree to which groups are aware of the

abiding differences in their interpretations of the Creed (vaguely redolent of class awareness à la Marx) and the metamorphosis of individual conscience (guilt about personal inadequacy) into collective conscience (a group's awareness of its own power and of the contingent fetters of civilization, vaguely Freudian). Now Freud and Marx have never quite bitten in America, and there are good reasons for that. But we may wish to note a peculiar outcome of their confluence, an outcome which is as American as moralism. A varying fervency of belief in the Creed, coupled with a self-delusion about the perfectibility of reality, is a cycle of moralism. But the same cycle, described as varying disagreement about the meaning of the Creed accompanied by a sensible appreciation of the *changeability* of reality (and hence the efficacy of action), is—a cycle of pragmatism!

Pragmatism, that combination of meaning and action, is every bit as deserving as moralism, that combination of feeling and illusion, of the title Huntington bestows on moralism—"the most positive American political response." Huntington has identified as a cycle of moralism what I have suggested could be called a cycle of pragmatism, but the choice to describe American political development in moralistic or pragmatic terms may lead to radically divergent political conclusions! If George is kvetching because he is drinking too much caffeine, we may wish to give him a sedative; if he is kvetching because he is late for the theater, we may want to do something expeditious to get him there on time.

And yet, there is in the final analysis something more appealing about the premises of Huntington's moralism cycle. Huntington's cycle, as we have seen, is unsociological—it doesn't divide Americans up into groups—because it is historical. But the cycle of moralism is also unsociological in another way: It is psychological. In speaking of our perception of the gap between ideals and institutions, Huntington insists neither that our perceptions and awareness of politics are sociologically determined, nor does he suggest that we choose what to believe for utilitarian, perverse, personal reasons. Rather, our political vision screens resemble the Lockean *tabula rasa*, albeit blank slates which are periodically beclouded. And when speaking of the intensity of our feelings for the Creed, Huntington does not discriminate on the basis of social divisions among alternative meanings of the Creed, holding that all are equally legitimate, all equally patriotic. These are very liberal, democratic presumptions. Perhaps, then, if American politics is disharmonious, as Huntington argues, it is because the bedrock of the liberal democratic vision remains in place; if the disharmony of American politics has ebbed even slightly, we had better check the foundations. □



Don Herzog

THE FORLORN DREAMER OF PRAGUE

Salvaging Franz Kafka from the slums of family and politics.

Kafka's prose is stripped of all adornment, almost childish in its simplicity. The description is sparse: Often faceless characters move about in blank settings. Yet the limpid sentences, marching past so effortlessly, disrupt the reader's expectations; for the plots are constructed with crazy angles and careening non sequiturs. Joseph K. leaves the painter's unbearably stuffy apartment and finds himself somehow back in the unending corridors of the Court's offices. Blumfeld, the innocuous elderly bachelor, returns home and finds "two small white celluloid balls with blue stripes jumping up and down side by side on the parquet; when one of them touches the floor the other is in the air, a game they continue ceaselessly to play." Out for a stroll with a newly met acquaintance, one fellow realizes "that perhaps my long body displeased him by making him feel too small," and so gradually crumples himself up until his head is almost on the ground. In its evanescent grasp of concrete detail and its apparently sensible whimsy, it is art sculpted into dreams.

And it is teasingly autobiographical art. The famed man-turned-insect of "The Metamorphosis" is named Gregor Samsa, and it requires no literary detective to spy "Kafka" lurking in "Samsa." The accused of *The Trial* is Joseph K. The stranger to the village of *The Castle* is simply K. In one story after another we find ominous authority figures threatening ever-hesitant narrators and main characters, or characters plagued with the sense they are irredeemably outsiders. So Kafka's art provokes an increasingly insistent demand: Just who was this Kafka? What were the sources of his poignant sense of exclusion? We want a link between his art and his life, a link which will perhaps dispel the troubling aura of mystery surrounding the art.

Sixteen Self Sketches, George Bernard

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Shaw's skittish encounter with his favorite subject, commences with some characteristically cheerful caveats:

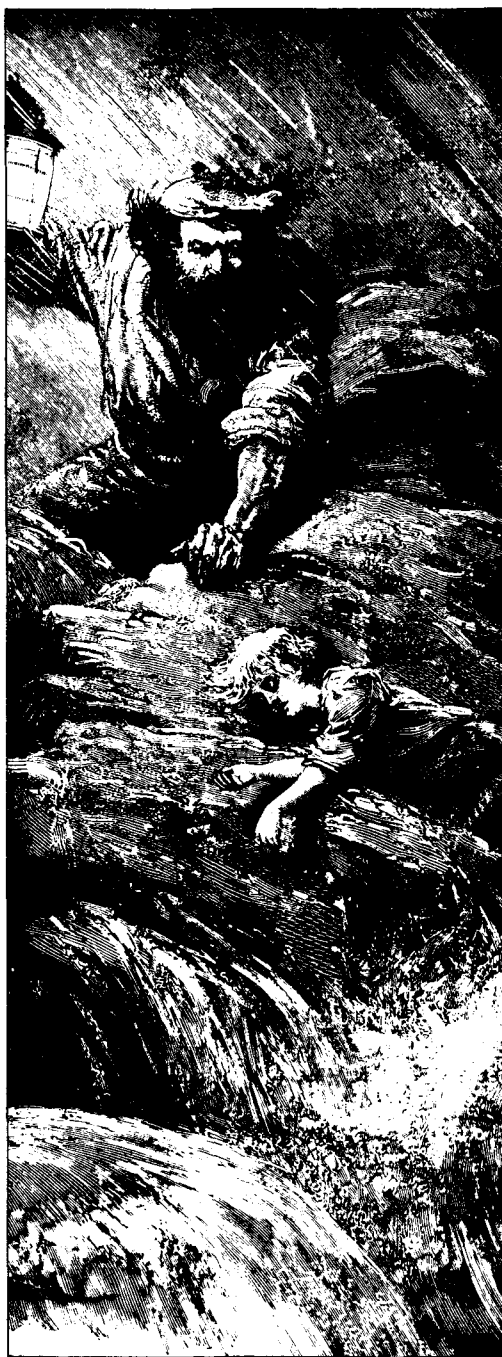
How am I to pick out and describe that point-five per cent of myself that distinguishes me from other men more or less fortunate than I? What earthly interest is there in a detailed account of how the illustrious Smith was born at Number Six High Street, and grew taller and

taller until he was twenty, when the obscure Brown, Jones, and Robinson, born at Number Seven, Eight, and Nine, went through exactly the same routine of growing, feeding, excreting, dressing and undressing, lodging and moving? To justify a biography Smith must have had adventures. Exceptional things must have happened to him.

The bleak truth of Kafka's life is that he had no adventures at all. Trained as a lawyer, he worked in an insurance office, helping settle accident claims filed by workers. With what seems like genuinely extraordinary perversity, he managed never to marry the woman he was intimately devoted to—though mostly by mail—for years. He contracted tuberculosis, which slowly but surely ravaged his already frail body, and died, leaving behind a scattering of published short stories and some longer manuscripts, with firm instructions to his best friend Max Brod that they be destroyed. Add one vibrantly alive father who apparently treated Kafka with crass insensitivity, one bunch of abiding uncertainties over what to make of his Jewish identity, pepper with morbid fantasies, and it seems we have all the makings of a soap opera.

So it is much to Ronald Hayman's credit that he has taken these unpromising materials and fashioned a graceful biography.* Aside from an occasional sentence that goes thud in the night, it is written in an unobtrusive style which never threatens to upstage Kafka. Hayman shows that while Kafka may not have had any swashbuckling, he possessed the neurotic's ability to transform the minutiae of everyday life into adventures of the inner self. *Kafka* is the drama of a man who probed himself relentlessly, ripping away at freshly healed psychic scabs and wrenching forth his art with reckless disregard for his health: Always a poor sleeper, he would write far into the night, allowing himself finally to collapse in exhaustion. The events of his life play a carefully limited supporting role. Judiciously, Hayman re-

**Kafka: A Biography*, Oxford University Press, \$19.95.



frains from trotting out the myth of the suffering artist for yet another trite run. Close enough to Kafka's travails to recount them sympathetically, he manages to keep enough distance to avoid drowning in lachrymose sniffles. In these respects, this is first-rate biography, which makes for appropriately unpleasant reading.

Hayman's Kafka suffers a classic case of what R.D. Laing named ontological insecurity. He is always teetering uncertainly, worrying whether he is firmly seated in the world. I don't mean simply that Kafka doubted his right to exist, though there is that: This is a man who could feel it was somehow illegitimate for him to wait for a tram. It's rather his never feeling he belonged. He frets, in letters, diaries, and dreams: He is not a man, he is a Jew; he is neither, but a contemptible animal, even an insect; he is not even fully organic, but is flesh fused with metal. (Had overuse not thrashed the concept to a vacuous death, we might call this sense of not belonging "alienation.") At the end of *The Trial*, Joseph K. knows he should take the knife and stab himself, but is unable to do so, and dies all the more shamefully. The hesitation is literally Kafkaesque: Obsessed with visions of butcher knives and lacerations, Kafka could note in his diary, "The best place to stab seems to be between the throat and the chin. You raise the chin and stick the knife into the tensed muscles." But he did not possess sufficient resolve to act on any of his suicidal or masochistic fantasies. Instead, he punished himself in his prose, fending women off with letters at once invitingly intimate and brusquely dismissive, even abusive. The best facet of Hayman's book is his portrayal of Kafka as a Humean self, a loose-knit collection of divided principalities. Orthodox empiricist readers will lurch when they realize how far from human flourishing that self is.

What, then, of our desire for a link between Kafka's life and his art? Here Hayman fails us, for he forges too tight and crude a link. He draws extensively on a long letter the 36-year-old Kafka wrote to his father, a pungent compound of accusation and self-accusation, feverish pride and haunting doubt. In that letter, Kafka gnaws away at his memories of a big bold tyrant, and claims, "My writing was all about you; all I did there, after all, was to bemoan what I could not bemoan upon your breast." Time and again, Hayman tells us that Kafka is using his art to confront his father. What was new about Kafka's work, we learn on the very first page, "was the method of opening the throttle fully to the autobiographical impulse. Obliquely and subtly, but more fully, more openly and more boldly than before, he was using fiction to confront his fear of his father, the big, burly, bull-necked, bullying, self-confident, successful businessman whose unpredictable outbursts of rage still frightened him." The unresolved Oedipal scene—tyrannical father, cringing son—haunts Hayman's pages almost as diligently as it does Freud's.

This just won't do. It is notorious that neurotics rewrite their childhood histories, and Hayman uses the letter quite uncritically. Nor may we simply retreat and say that what matters is that Kafka *felt* his father abused him. For it is a bit embarrassing to point out at this late date in the psychobiography game that plenty of people have risen from confined families with domineering fathers and have not written "In the Penal Colony" or *The Trial*. Adding to the account the occasional obligatory nod that there was "something special about his talent," while doubtless true, is hardly informative. Were Kafka's art nothing but, as Edmund Wilson put it, "the half-expressed gasp of a self-doubting

soul trampled under," we should have to second Wilson's verdict: "I do not see how one can possibly take him for either a great artist or a moral guide."

But Hayman provides us with the materials to undercut both Wilson's summary dismissal and his own Oedipal reduction. He tells us, for instance, that Kafka was captivated by a traveling Yiddish theater troupe, and tinkered with traditional Jewish literature and scholarship. Here is a much more promising way of connecting Kafka's life and writing: The ironic search for knowledge of divinity, the pseudō-learning of "Investigations of a Dog," take on added significance when we see the traditions Kafka drew from.

I want, however, to pursue Kafka in another direction, a direction Hayman notes only in passing. We can profitably replace Kafka the terrified son with Kafka the gazing dreamer. If it's necessary, we can still plead the authority of Kafka's own view: "My talent for portraying my dream-like inner life has relegated everything else to the incidental, and it's becoming dreadfully and increasingly stunted. Nothing else will ever give me any satisfaction." Max Brod too could record that nothing interested Kafka but his dreams.

The project of analyzing Kafka's texts as dreams doubtless invites renewed skeptical rejoinders and charges of reductionism. To make sense of someone's dreams, don't we need, as Freud urges, the dreamer's own associations? And then won't the dream be nothing but a crazy quilt replay of the life? It seems we are back again at a tight, crude link between the art and the life.

Suppose, however, we refuse to follow Freud's suggestion that we strip away the manifest content of the dream to reveal its latent meaning. Suppose instead we focus on the dream as it is dreamed. To start, we can appreciate the forms Kafka employs to cast his thoughts, however bizarre or ineluctably personal they may have been. Anyone who has bulldozed his way through great marshmallow gobs of gently unyielding bureaucracy, or failed in the valiant attempt, will resonate immediately to much of Kafka's work. Indeed, Hannah Arendt, if I read her correctly, scoffed at the suggestion that Kafka's work had any theological portent. She wanted to make Kafka into a prophet of "the true nature of the thing called bureaucracy," which she reviled in turn as an unspeakable curse on modern society.

Somehow, though, casting Kafka as a foe of bureaucracy (and a champion of what? decentralization? feudalism?) doesn't quite wash. Even if we grant his uncanny psychological insight into the plight of those caught up in bureaucratic mazes, it seems there is more than a tottering Hapsburg bureaucracy animating his work. A reading confining Kafka's thought to bureaucracy would be a



cramped and confusing reading. It would be better, I think, to focus on the elusive nature of his narratives, their ability to send our thoughts spinning off in ill-defined directions. For tracking down that elusive element seems to me essential for coming to an illuminating reading of his art. But here I need to step back a moment.

Some of our concepts invite a kind of perversely abstract meandering, a refusal to rest content with concrete experience. One might think it is impossible to love a woman: One can love only this particular woman, or that one, and so never experience "love of a woman" itself. A friend once raced all over San Francisco, seeking the quintessential San Francisco, resolutely refusing to agree that San Francisco was the bundle of experiences he had while looking for the uniquely totalizing one he never found. Some of those concepts, in turn, serve as culturally pregnant symbols at the heart of our collective self-understanding, symbols we can never grasp quite completely. So, for example, the experience of authority in Kafka's work is not just the reflection of a menacing father, nor even a concrete experience confined to bureaucracy. It echoes with larger and irreducibly intangible overtones. And so it acts just as certain elements of dreams, which Freud noted are immune to the technique of association and render dream interpretation more difficult. Freud thought there were two classes of such elements: sexual symbols whose definition does not hinge on the individual's life history, and "navels" of the dream where association goes off in so many overdetermined directions that none can successfully be chased down. But here we can reinsert some of the social content conspicuously lacking in Freud, and say that at least some of the stubbornly resistant elements of dreams are cultural symbols. Just as the dream allows the dreamer to express himself in metaphors, the symbols he uses allow others access to the loftier import of those metaphors.

A hasty sketch of modern society would look something like this: *Differentiation* is the key to the modern world. There are more and more well-defined spheres of social interaction, and the roles in each are more and more crisply delineated and distinguished from other roles. That allows us freedom: The many spheres provide arenas filled with significant options; and our ability to take off and put on masks as we move from sphere to sphere preserves our autonomy. I may humiliate myself in the classroom, but I can still confidently go out to eat, or play jazz with some friends. Indeed, as Durkheim urged, it is extensive social differentiation which allows us to become individuals in the first place. In pursuing such different activities, we each develop different capacities and inclinations. Were we all wrapped up in the same

activities, our individuality would be much less colorful. So there are social preconditions for freedom, and modern society realizes those preconditions to an ever-increasing extent.

But, like anything else, differentiation imposes its costs. And the role I want to nominate Kafka for is this: He dramatizes those costs in all their harrowing intensity. So consider a first cost, from Durkheim: Freedom threatens always to lapse into anomie; an individual integrated in so many different contexts may feel wholly integrated in none at all. So for example Gregor Samsa is an insect partly because he cannot negotiate the yawning gap between the demands of his family and those of his job. Never whole, he is not a human being at all.

A second cost comes from Weber: We may live in a rational world, but we know far less about how our own world operates than any primitive man or woman knew about his or hers; paradoxically, their world was full of magic, but ours is full of mystery. And Kafka's "Investigations of a Dog" is not only an ironic inversion of Talmudic exploration, but also a probing study of unshakable ignorance. The dog not only ignores men just as men ignore God, but he cannot even master the arcane windings of canine ritual and belief.

And a third cost comes from Freud: Modern society demands the painful rigor of cleanliness, order, discipline, and responsibility; we cannot lapse back into the slovenly comfort of those pursuing just a few activities, but we must sublimate our basic drives to provide the energy to navi-

gate our way through a social world drained of sensuality. Joseph K.'s erotic encounters with Leni may be joltingly concrete, but they are nonetheless only encounters. His real work lies in pursuing his trial.

Here we see the dark underside of freedom and individuality. And here we see Kafka's artistic genius. He reveals not simply the torment of a fragile child, not simply a critique of bureaucracy. Instead, he poignantly dramatizes the inescapable sense of loss, ignorance, and harsh discipline we tend, defensively, to ignore or dismiss. I say "inescapable" sense just because, however elusively, that sense is built right into our self-conceptions. It has such symbolic overtones because it is part of who we are.

Surrendering the benefits of differentiation in the name of recapturing community or wholeness would mean surrendering our freedom and individuality, and so I can only marvel at foes—right and left—of modern society. I don't mean to embrace any tragic pessimism about our problems. It's quite clear, for example, that a radically decentralized society would be less shattering, and could preserve and even further the possibilities of freedom. Yet even a decentralized differentiated society would wreak its psychic costs.

And so it is our fate to be living the nightmare Kafka dreamed. Awake, we can laugh at it, or ignore it, and cheerily go about our business. But I don't think we can escape its confines, and we have in Kafka's writing a beautiful portrayal of our plight. □



Walter E. Williams

A RECIPE FOR THE GOOD SOCIETY

A report from the Federal Unequality Commission.

What are the goals for America if it is to become the good society? For an answer, you need only consult the Benjamin Hookses of the civil rights movement, the Jane Fondas of the New Left, or any socially sensitive journalist bringing us the six o'clock news, "Nightly News," or "Sixty Minutes." Depending on which conscience-of-America representative you ask, the answer may vary slightly. But generally, they will all tell you that the goal of America should be: equality of opportunity, no racial or sexual discrimination, equality of income, and social justice.

This is a tall order, one which I am sure would try the patience, imagination, and creativity even of a man like God. But let me try. Let's pretend that I have been appointed commissioner of the Federal Unequality Commission whose acronym, by the way, would be outlawed even in cases of most urgent brevity. The commission's mandate is to lay out the ground rules for a good society, that society envisioned by the *Washington Post* editorialists. My first task is to present Congress with a new set of guidelines that will become the law of the land.

I begin by identifying all sources of racial discrimination. Segregation, of course, is the hallmark of discrimination and injustice; the U.S. Supreme Court ruled thus in the famous *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954: Separate is inherently unequal. How do you tell whether a school is segregated? Easy. You count the number of students at the school. If the number of blacks in attendance is less than their percentage in the population, the school is segregated. It is common knowledge that U.S. schools are segregated, in fact more segregated today than twenty years ago. But the magnitude of our school problem must not cause us to ignore the rampant segregation in our nation's other institutions and public places.

A prime example of societal insensitivity

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to unchecked segregation—all the litigation regarding access to public accommodations notwithstanding—is any water fountain at Washington National Airport. The fact is that black people are 70 percent of the D.C. population. Yet a random visit to the D.C. airport would show you very few blacks drinking water out of the fountains. If the fountains were fully desegregated, there would be far more blacks at the fountains at any one given time. By the same token, blacks are overdrinking at water fountains in Anacostia. Solution: Bus whites to Anacostia and blacks to the airport until there is proportional representation at both spots.

The nation's water fountains are only the tip of the segregation iceberg. Take the U.S. Library of Congress. While many blacks work in the Library of Congress, very few—surely not 70 percent—of the readers and researchers are black. The Library of Congress is racially segregated. Go to any ice hockey game, you will notice racially segregated audiences. Go to Iowa, Montana, or Idaho. You'll see these states

are racially segregated. None has its correct proportion of blacks; blacks, who make up more than 10 percent of the nation, are grossly underrepresented in Iowa (1.4%), Montana (0.2%), and Idaho (0.3%), not to mention several other states.

These and many other cases of racial segregation demand solutions—namely, integration at all deliberate speed. The only feasible solution to segregation is busing—some of which will be quite costly. But in the good society, the following rule applies: Whenever there is a conflict between cost and benefit, the benefit must always be the guiding principle. Therefore, in cities like Detroit, Philadelphia, and the nation's capital, where they are overrepresented, blacks must be willing to be bused to states like Montana, Iowa, and Idaho, where they are underrepresented. One might of course ask why blacks should bear the burden of busing. The answer is simple: If we were to bus whites from Montana, Iowa, and Idaho to the cities we'd depopulate those states. What would we then eat?

Establishing racial proportionality in the cities, libraries, schools, and entertainment centers, it must be admitted, will be a costly and irksome business. Black people may initially reject the idea of moving to one of the underrepresented states. They may even disavow that state's standing as a bona fide member of the union. White Iowans may take the same attitude toward Detroit. They are all overlooking one cardinal fact: When it comes to making the good society, what people would selfishly do with their lives is but a tertiary matter. It's not the individual that counts; it's society, the good society.

Another obstacle in the struggle to achieve racial balance is that you just can't call all white people white. Certain subtle differences can play havoc with busing programs. Some white people are of German ancestry while others are Irish, Jewish, Italian, Greek, Armenian, French, even Polish, and to make matters worse



there is a large group of whites that falls under the damned-if-I (or they)-can-tell category. Some groups, the Irish and Italians, say, might loathe the thought of being classified together simply as whites. Yes, strict racial proportionality is no easy goal, particularly if you bear in mind the greed that inheres in man. Let's say that Washington organizes a draft of Italians to meet the racial needs of Utah. Utah's not being a state known for its high income or fine Italian restaurants may incite Italians to disavow their heritage. Such hanky-panky by a white group would be intolerable. Blacks, after all, have no hanky-panky opportunities and the Japanese just one. Who in the world is a black going to say he is? What we'll need, then, is to set up some kind of government agency for racial classification, like the one in South Africa, except ours will have a full appeals process.

Once true racial proportionality is established in all walks of American life, the job of maintenance will be relatively easy, what with recent advances in data management. Whatever minor inconveniences there may be will be a cheap price to pay for the good society. For instance, a white planning to relocate in Miami may be required to delay his move until a white moves out. Or he may have to wait until a Miami white dies. In the case of Miami he won't have to wait long. Most whites in Miami are elderly, and anyway the city has a high crime rate. If by chance no vacancies become available nine whites could band together, hire a black, and move to Miami in a sort of package deal. I'm sure that given a demand for such package deals, the free market would generate middlemen and other facilitators to accommodate such desires, along the lines of a dating service.

For all its numbing complexity, the question of racial proportional representation is a relatively minor aspect in the movement toward the good society. According to most observers, the major barrier to the good society in America is posed by inequalities in income and opportunity. Unequal income and unequal opportunity in fact are rife. Just look at personal income statistics. Some Americans earn hundreds of thousands of dollars a year while others earn a mere pittance, if anything at all. Then look at opportunity. An executive's son has greater opportunity to be successful than a janitor's son. Is this fair?

Although the Federal Unequality Commission will have its hands full

implementing racial proportional representation, it will also be responsible for rooting out all sources of unequalness. The Commission must first pinpoint the major causes of unequal incomes and opportunity. Since we are all equal, this being one of those self-evident truths embodied in the United States Declaration of Independence, all causes of unequal out-

comes will be traceable to our environment.

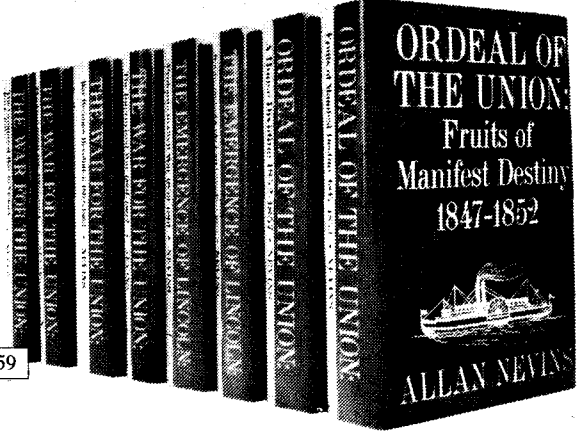
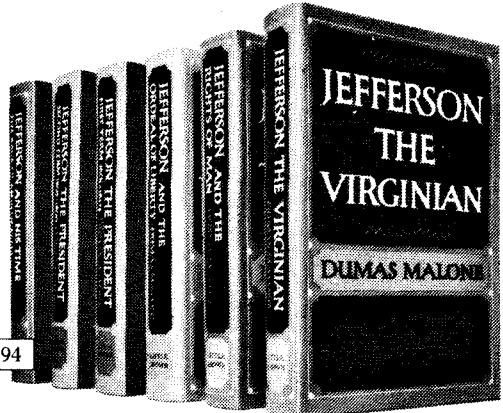
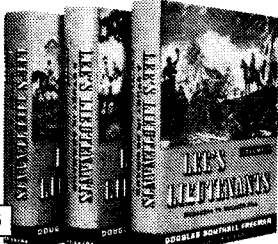
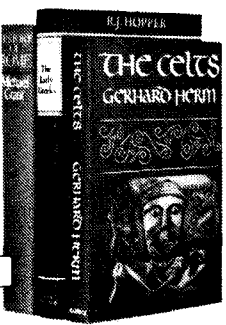
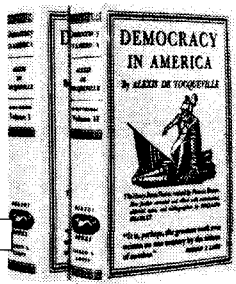
Perhaps the most overlooked source of unequal income and opportunity is the institution of marriage. In discussions and debates on affirmative action and discrimination, I have often remarked that when

seeking a wife, I failed to give every woman an equal opportunity. I've confessed to audiences around the world that I arbitrarily discriminated against Italian women, Irish women, Jewish women, Chinese women, fat women, ugly women, not to mention women who do not bathe frequently. Many of my listeners chastised me for this. Others said that discrimina-

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tion in marriage is unlike other forms of discrimination in that it doesn't hurt anyone. Though I consider the latter statement a personal insult—it implies that since I didn't hurt some woman by getting married I must be the kind of man no other woman would want—I'll try not to stray from the topic. Let me just focus on how marriage decisions foster and aggravate differences in income and opportunity.

Whom do people marry? In a word or two, people tend to marry people just like themselves, but mostly of the opposite sex. College-educated people tend to marry those who are also college-educated. High-income people tend to marry other high-income people. Low-income people marry low-income people. High-I.Q. people marry people with high I.Q.'s. We can think of many other cases of natural selection through marriage. For example, dwarfs would shrink at the notion of marrying a tall person, and vice versa.

What is the social impact of all this? It leaves people more differentiated than if they formed their associations on a more random basis. Look at it. If wealthy people marry other wealthy people, and poor people marry other poor people, what do you get? You get a society with dramatic class distinctions: a wealthy class and a poor class. The same might be said about high-I.Q. and highly educated people marrying each other. Such assortative (selective) behavior not only increases income, I.Q., and education differences among adults, it increases differences in the next generation as well. Kids growing up in an environment where the father says, "I anticipate that your polymorphonuclearneutrophils will eliminate the antibody," will have an edge on the kid whose father says, "You'll get better." The bottom line is that assortative behavior is the transmitter of the inequality disease.

What should the responsibility of the Federal Unequality Commission be in this regard? The answer is obvious. Let's start with the widely acknowledged income disparities between races. Any civil rights leader will tell you that black income is only 57 percent of white income. Clearly, at least at the first-approximation level of analysis, too many white people are marrying only white people and too many black people are marrying only black people. Since white people are richer than black people, there is great need for an Executive Order calling for matrimonial affirmative action. This would require wealthy white people to marry poor black people until all poor

black people are used up. Since integration efforts have failed in the past, I suspect that marriage integration will require something stronger than voluntary compliance. Say that a wealthy white woman wants to get married. She would have to post notices in conspicuous places, including the ghetto, announcing such an intent. These notices would remain posted for a period of no less than 120 days. Respondents would be evaluated on the basis of income, education, I.Q., and racial status. Thus blacks with high income, education, and I.Q. would not qualify, since we're also out to eradicate class distinctions, not just racial ones. As a market-oriented commissioner of the Federal Unequality Commission, I would make a special provision for the wealthy white man who wants to marry a wealthy white woman badly enough. He would simply be required to draw on his own resources to make a black poor man wealthy and thereby eliminate the need for that poor black man to marry the wealthy white woman. Application of this program on an intra- and inter-racial basis for several generations will eliminate gross class and income differences from our society.

Yet, as we know, there are always some people who try to get more, who try harder than others, and so we risk reappearance of those invidious distinctions between people. One preventive is to have a confiscatory tax on inheritance. Unequality often comes from being born into family A instead of family B. Family A is

penniless, but family B gives its children resources that enable them to earn high incomes throughout their lives. The elimination of inheritance would put an end to such disparities.

But there's a hitch. Inheritance is not simply a matter of money, and this introduces some real problems that strike me as insolvable. Take Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, the 7-foot, 2-inch center for the Los Angeles Lakers basketball team. He started out poor in New York just like I started out poor in Philadelphia. He's rich now, but I'm not. Or Bill Cosby, who lived in my own neighborhood; he's rich, I'm not. Or Johnny Mathis, he's rich, I'm not. These people, you see, inherited things I didn't. Kareem Abdul-Jabbar inherited genes that made him grow tall. Johnny Mathis inherited genes that made for a melodious voice box. Now how can we tax such inheritances? Only the insensitive would suggest cutting part of Abdul-Jabbar's legs off (though many a sportscaster has claimed you could cut Jabbar in two and come up with a fine pair of guards) or hatcheting Mathis's voice box. So something else must be done.

Corrective policy emerges when you seriously and searchingly ask: Why do people like Ali, Abdul-Jabbar, and Mathis earn more money than, say, Walter Williams? The fault, I contend, is not mine but society's. I can hear people, particularly right-wing conservatives, saying, "Here we go again, somebody blaming society for his own shortcomings." But this time it is true; society is at fault. Why? Because

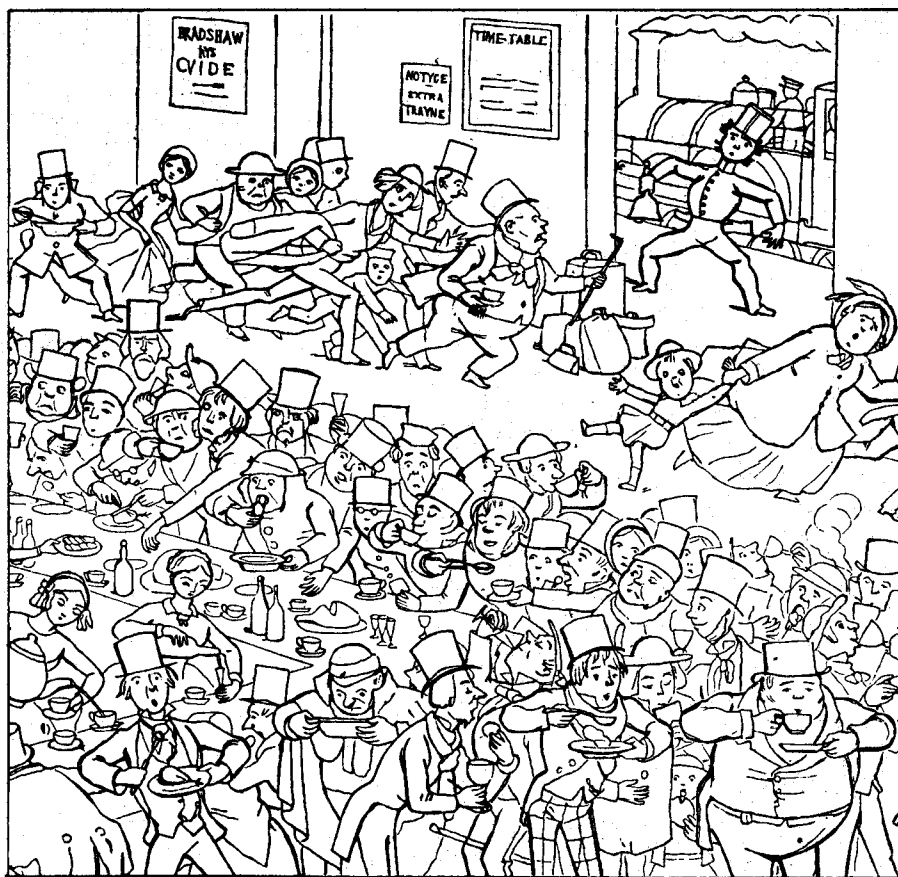
society discriminates. Its members will go out and pay \$30 for a front row seat to listen to a Johnny Mathis concert, but won't pay a nickel to hear me sing. Some say I don't sing all that well, but what's good singing? It's all so subjective and arbitrary. Besides, any test used to determine whether I'm a good or bad singer has not been validated by the federal government's Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).

The situation calls for extension of equal-pay-for-equal-work and equal-pay-for-comparable-work laws into the entertainment industries. These could be enforced through a music stamp program (odd and even days wouldn't work): The government would issue music stamps to "disadvantaged" singers like me. People who paid money to hear me sing would, upon completion of the concert, be given a music stamp. Then if they wanted to hear Johnny Mathis sing they'd be required to pay not just the admission price, but a stamp or two. This would ensure utilization of disadvantaged singers. It goes without saying that another federal agency would have to be created to track down and prosecute music stamp counterfeiters.

There are countless other unfair outcomes in our society which this initial report of the Federal Unequality Commission hasn't the space to go into. To cite one example, lightning will systematically strike some people and not others—mostly those living in non-urban areas. You might say that lightning is an Act of God. That's true as far as it goes, but the commission is concerned that these people were led to live in rural areas by as yet undetermined discriminatory factors.

There are other unfair outcomes. Women have a much higher probability of pregnancy than men. On top of that, older women experience pregnancies with a higher incidence of birth defects than do younger women. This combination of sexism and ageism is also of great concern to the commission. I could go on, ad nauseum.

And so, the life of the Federal Unequality Commission promises to be a long one. Indeed, even if the commission is successful in producing the good society, its scope will remain limitless. We've all heard it said that there is equality in death. While such a statement may bring comfort to some, it need not be true. Preliminary investigations have already raised a disturbing question or two. Just ask yourself: Does Judas get the same treatment as John? □





EMINENTOES

PEKING DUCK

John King Fairbank—one is tempted to call him John Fairbank *Rex* of American Sinology—has led a long, wondrously fortunate, productive, interesting, satisfying—and yes, self-satisfied—life. His story, as recounted in a newly published memoir, *Chinabound*,* moves inexorably from sturdy seedling to brilliant fruit. It tells the progress of a bright, confident little boy from South Dakota who found his way happily to the right schools, Phillips Exeter Academy and Harvard; who went to Oxford as a Rhodes scholar and thence to Peking, as a pioneering student of Chinese history. During World War II and immediately afterward he served his government as a civilian in China, then returned to his Harvard professorship and eventually became the first head of the East Asian Research Center, which now bears his name. He was a world traveler, lecturer, pundit, academic entrepreneur, and the “father” of many Ph.D.’s. His former students, associates, and friends are prominent everywhere—in universities, government service, and the news media. Through his academic progeny, his publications and, not least, his institutionalization at Harvard, John King Fairbank has won the only immortality in which he believes—his name on the lips of future scholars.

What remains, then, but to close this handsome new book of triumphant autobiography with an approving pat and a platitude—“a full life well lived” or even “a good run for the money”? What could possibly be wrong with the intellectual legacy of a life in which everything seemed so right?

Well, a great deal was wrong—and wrongest of all is that Fairbank still cannot see it. The irony of Fairbank’s

career is that as a historian of China who has constantly insisted that study of the past informs present action and that historical knowledge is “the best protection against ideological fanaticism,” he has by his own example unwittingly disproved his thesis. He may have invoked history, but it is ideology that he has served.

In *Chinabound* Fairbank tells us that his experience during the heyday of McCarthyist demagoguery, when he was publicly accused of abetting the “loss of China” to Communism, gave him “an abiding commitment to educate the American public,” to help base national policy on “knowledge and reason instead of violence and fear.” The goal is admirable, as long as one holds in mind that humble man, not God, is its pursuer. “Knowledge” itself is a full-time goal, and reason can be a tricky instrument. In his persistent trumpeting of “reason,” Fairbank comes across for all the world like the most unenlightened latter-day apostle of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, who never realizes that reason is actually a guided object, and that extrarational and often murky

assumptions sit at the controls.

Fairbankian assumptions about the present realities of China date back to his 1942-43 sojourn in the Chinese wartime capital of Chungking, where, along with many other foreigners, he was repelled by the corrupt and inept Kuomintang (KMT) regime headed by Chiang Kai-shek and began to look toward “the sunny vitality and homespun egalitarianism of the CCP [Chinese Communist Party] at [its stronghold] Yenan. . . .” Fairbank fit very much into a picture that the writer Emily Hahn once described of Americans then in Chungking and of the “quiet, industrious push on the part of the communists” to capture their sympathies:

These [American] newcomers found it pleasant and titivating to be permitted a glimpse of a mysterious, romantic minority group. Each was given the impression that he alone of all foreigners really understood the situation and could see into the hearts of the hitherto inscrutable Chinese. Soon magazines and newspapers in the United States were printing articles referring to the Chinese Communists as stout fellows of uncommon virtue, who could save China if only they could get out from under the wraps kept on them by a corrupt, swollen bureaucracy.



by Miriam and Ivan D. London

Given the time and circumstances, such impressionability is understandable. We are all fallible and even the cleverest among us can at some point be taken in. Less understandable, however, is that a historian who made a self-professed career of bringing “learning” to bear upon American foreign policy should have remained transfixed for life by the red star over China, which, like his vision of Yenan in 1943, “glowed in the distance.” No mystery confronts us, however. In *Chinabound* Fairbank blithely explains: “I was committed to viewing ‘communism’ as bad in America but good in China, which I was convinced was true.” Fairbank, the advocate, has remained true to his commitment, but what of Fairbank the scholar and his commitment to history?

In his book *China Perceived* (1974) Fairbank reprinted “with modest pride” an article he had published in the *Atlantic Monthly* (September 1946), suggesting that the United States would sooner or later have to come to terms with Chinese Communism. This article also contains a few of his other thoughts at the time:

We should also note that humanitarianism is an important part of Chinese Communist dogma. . . . Communist propaganda toward Kuomintang China has been increasingly on a liberal line, protesting violations of civil liberty, demanding freedom of speech, assembly, and publication, and denouncing the callousness of officialdom to human suffering. However ruthlessly the news and propaganda monopoly of the Communist Party may try to control thought in its own areas, it is plain that it seeks to align itself with the Chinese liberal tradition, which is mainly the tradition of individual self-expression on the part of the scholar class. From early times the courageous scholar has been the man entitled by his learning to speak out against the misdeeds of authority. This tradition is one hope of liberalism in China. . . .

Whether Communist China can eventually reconcile a socialist economy with individual liberty we do not know. . . .

Presumably, eighteen years of China-study later, Fairbank did know, but, if so, he did not say. It so hap-

* *Chinabound: A Fifty-Year Memoir*, Harper & Row, \$20.00.

Miriam London is a researcher in Soviet and Chinese studies. Ivan D. London is Professor of Psychology at Brooklyn College of the City University of New York.

pens that 1974 was part of what has since been called China's "black decade" (1966-76), a time of savage repression and cultural darkness, when humanitarianism was a dirty "bourgeois" word and any courageous scholar who had survived humiliation and physical torment at the hands of the Red Guards was condemned to silence and despair. A number of Fairbank's distinguished friends were among the many scholar-victims. If he knew this in 1974, he also did not say. Their names and fates are finally recorded in *Chinabound*, like a wistful addendum, following for no apparent reason an account of a VIP dinner in Peking, at which he was congratulated by Deng Xiaoping "on having helped Sino-American relations." Far from causing any soul-searching, these "excesses" of the Cultural Revolution seem to confront him still as a painful non sequitur, which he is at a loss to explain.

It was also in the midst of the black decade that Fairbank again went to China and afterward reported in *Foreign Affairs* (October 1972): "The stress and even violence of 1966-69 have now been succeeded . . . by a sense of relaxation and euphoria that makes 1972 a happy time to be in China." Indeed, he concluded that the "Maoist revolution is on the

whole the best thing that has happened to the Chinese people in many centuries. At least, most Chinese seem now to believe so, and it will be hard to prove otherwise."

As to the striving for civil liberties and the "Chinese liberal tradition," which so preoccupied him in 1946, Fairbank seemed to have tossed these back into history's bottomless grab bag. In the *Foreign Affairs* article, he implied the irrelevance of such notions for "China's government by exemplary moral men, not laws"; and in *China Perceived* he suggested that this "new China full of morale" might even offer fresh models to regenerate a rather worn-out United States: "The personal quality of China's government is evident if one compares the very human aura of Chairman Mao's thought as a final arbiter with the rather impersonal legal concepts of the American Constitution."

Upon the death of Mao Zedong in September 1976, Fairbank protested the unseemly use in the Western press of the term "power struggle" to describe what he preferred to call "policy problems on which honest revolutionaries disagree" (*New York Review of Books*, October 14, 1976). In his view, this was simply trying to lower China, which, "unlike us . . . has no crisis of inflation, unemployment, crime, or corruption," to our own nasty level:

Ford vs. Carter is a more naked power struggle than anything going on in Peking. . . . By calling the conflict between the Peking policy factions a "power struggle," we . . . cut down dedicated revolutionaries, whose thinking condemns selfishness and personal aggrandizement, to the size of ambitious individualists of a type we know well—Chang Chun-chiao [Zhang Chunqiao], for instance, is implied to be no more than John Connally with chopsticks. We impose our self-image on the distant Chinese scene.

Vice-Premier Zhang Chunqiao, member of the Politburo Standing Committee, was one of the so-called Gang of Four secretly arrested on October 6, 1976—a coup revealed to the world later that month, evidently just after Fairbank's inimitable comments had gone to press. At the 1980 trial of the Gang of Four, this "honest revolutionaries" was sentenced to death, with a two-year suspension of execution, for "counterrevolutionary crimes." (One can only imagine then the fate of Carter or Ford!)

It was not long after the return to power of Deng Xiaoping that the Chinese press began to divulge crimes and corrupt practices previously reported only by refugees.

Deng himself summed up a goodly number in an important speech in 1980: "arson, murder, bombings, robbery and theft; frequent reports of rape, the kidnapping and sale of women, and organized prostitution; the growth of such criminal activities as smuggling, tax evasion, speculation and profiteering, bribery, graft and corruption, drug peddling and addiction and so forth. . . ." As to unemployment, the latest officially admitted figure is 20 million.

Compared with his journalism, Fairbank's "classic" work *The United States and China* (4th edition, 1979) appears more solid and judicious. Closer examination, however, reveals that the "message" is the same and the factual content often spurious and uncorrected by more recent evidence. Any green student of Chinese Communist history would come away from this book impressed by what Fairbank calls Mao's "gargantuan achievements from 1949 to 1976." Transposed to Nazi Germany, Fairbank's view of Mao's record would go something like this: Although Hitler persecuted a small non-Aryan minority, with some grievous consequences, he was a great leader who unified Germany, restored its national pride and dignity, lifted popular morale from the depths of humiliation and defeat, and built the excellent *Autobahn*. Therefore, we must avoid extremes in evaluation—either simple enthusiasm over his "inspirational message" or abject fear of Germany's "police-state authoritarianism." This means "sympathizing" as we try critically to comprehend, remembering that "instant morality is too easy" and that, above all, we must not be "culture-bound."

One effect of this sympathetic approach has been to downplay Mao's gargantuan failures. Thus, for example, in *The United States and China* Fairbank reported in 1979 that during the early sixties, following the collapse of the Great Leap Forward, "malnutrition was widespread and some starvation occurred." In 1977, the impeccable German scholar, Jürgen Domes, had already estimated that not less than 10 million people and possibly "a multiple of this figure"—from 25 to 40 million people—"fell victim to the consequences of the lack of food." Later, in 1981, an official Chinese journal, *Economic Management*, admitted to 10 million deaths from famine or malnutrition. According to another source (John S. Aird) as cited by the specialist Vaclav Smil, "demographic analysis of the latest Chinese popula-

tion data demands the conclusion that the net population loss during the famine years of 1959-61 reached perhaps as much as 25 million people." A comparison of descriptive data with the famine in the Soviet Ukraine during the early thirties suggests that this last figure is still too conservative. What Fairbank calls "some starvation" in the aftermath of Mao's great experiment may well have been the worst famine in modern Chinese history.

Any reader of Maoist China's "success story" according to Fairbank would have been totally unprepared for the dimensions of the economic disaster, ecological damage, and rural misery divulged after the Great Helmsman's death. Nor would such a reader understand the origins of current widespread disillusionment and intellectual ferment—the officially acknowledged "crisis of confidence" in both the Communist Party and the "socialist system." The latest inkling of this crisis is an attack by the Communist Party Central Committee's organ *Red Flag* (March 1, 1982) on "a few people who hold that our Party has degenerated, is hopeless, and must be toppled and that it is necessary to change the regime. They say that a two-party system should be adopted as in the United States. . . ."

Has Fairbank been listening to these "few people"—a few always means a disturbing number in Chinese political parlance—as he once did so avidly in Chungking during the decline of another corrupt regime? Evidently not, for this time he has plunked on the side not of the "rebels" but of the "established order." Perhaps these rebels should learn from his "classic" work that the "American way is not the only way" for the future, that "our recourse to legislation, contracts, legal rights and litigation is meeting limitations" and that "time may favor" China's "alternatives."

In developing his perspectives of Chinese history, Fairbank was by no means a lonely, embattled scholar, handicapped by any aftereffect of McCarthyist denunciations. A great patron waited in the wings. As *Chinabound* informs us, the Ford Foundation over the 15-year period 1955-1970 invested about \$5.5 million in China studies at Harvard alone, of which more than \$4 million went toward research. Undoubtedly, this fund helped create, under Fairbank's guidance and with his help, an important research base, rich in the bibliographical materials necessary to Sinological scholarship, which

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resulted in the production of many excellent and useful studies. "[W]ithout funding not much happens," Fairbank says, although he still feels that these and other monies poured into American universities during the same period—about \$40 million—were peanuts compared with those allocated to defense. Too much still went to "hardware" rather than to "brainware."

Financial support for academic research is both essential and desirable—and many forms of scientific investigation require huge expenditures—but such support is not unattended by dangers, especially in the "social sciences." Money and prestige add up to power as readily in academe as anywhere else. The academic power centers thus created not only tend to nurture such ills as "consensus scholarship," whereby "top scholars" agree to agree about certain data and methods, in this way establishing an unassailable "authoritative position"; these centers can also function to bury or discredit the alternative viewpoints so necessary to the pursuit of knowledge.

In the case of the powerful Sino-logical establishment at Harvard and its academic outposts, we raise a few questions to intrigue some curious and dispassionate inquirer in the future: Did accurate knowledge of the flesh-and-blood realities of China under Mao emerge from this establishment, or rather from the works of a few scattered outsiders and foreigners, often operating on a shoestring? To what extent was any seriously realistic view of life in the Chinese People's Republic discredited by gratuitous association with KMT propaganda from Taiwan, just as, a few decades before, any attempt to depict Soviet reality was automatically linked with fascism. Finally, how detrimental to sober China study was the hysterical radicalism that swept academe during the anti-Vietnam war movement of the sixties, subverting the very notion of objective truth, not to speak of an "honorable opposition"?

While explicit in his memoir about the evils of McCarthyism, Fairbank skips past the more fundamental assault on rationality that took place during our own version of a "cultural revolution," when many professors and students held onanistic propaganda sessions called "teach-ins" and either dinned or forced spokesmen of unpopular views into silence. It was in the dead heat of this time, in 1968, that Fairbank encouraged the formation of the disgracefully ideologized Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars, which quickly got out of hand and turned even on its

mentor. Fairbank is sketchy about such events, leaving, however, the general impression that it was all raucous good fun.

"Irrational faith appalls me," Fairbank writes at the outset of *China-bound*. He is referring to Christianity, from whose dogmas he considers

himself happily freed by an "irreligious upbringing." Strangely, the phrase "irrational faith" would most likely make an intellectual in China today think, not of religion, which is ironically enjoying a rebirth, but of something currently called "modern superstition"—a euphemism for the cult of Mao. In fact, has not the intelligent and accomplished John

King Fairbank himself long succumbed to a stubborn form of modern superstition—the cult of a new earthly order with the magical power to transform men? The conclusion is inescapable. And in his fervor he has also become a missionary—not as in times past to save the souls of China's people, but to salvage the image of the Chinese Communist regime. □

Pruning the Paper Pile

There's a commercial on TV plugging the services of an air express company. It shows an office worker being swept along a corridor by an avalanche of paper as his co-workers duck into their cubicles to avoid being bowled over by the onrushing mass.

The commercial is intended to dramatize the problem of coping with the pileup of paper in a modern business office. (No small problem, we can aver.) Such an inundation, however, is as nothing compared to the load of paperwork the federal government heaps on businesses large and small, state and local governments, and everyday citizens — at substantial cost to all.

Forms, forms everywhere. Ah, but there's good news today. The paper pile is being pruned.

The battle against federal paperwork is being waged under terms of the Paperwork Reduction Act. The law was enacted during the Carter Administration and is now being implemented and enforced by the Reagan Administration. Spearheading the battle is the U.S. Office of Management and Budget. From the front lines along the Potomac, OMB reports ground gained.

Last year federal paperwork was slashed 13%, or by nearly 200 million of what OMB calls "burden hours" ... a "burden hour" being one hour's paperwork by one person. The cutback is equivalent to 95,000 work-years. It amounts to over one hour saved for every man and woman in the U.S., OMB notes.

The trimming reflects some good old-fashioned horse sense:

- a revision of program-logging rules for radio stations, the rules having been issued originally to monitor program content;
- adoption of a common medical claim form for use by Medicare, Medicaid, and insurance companies;
- cutting back to a single page a multi-page quarterly tax form issued by the Internal Revenue Service for use by employers;
- revising the requirements for truck drivers' daily logs and exempting certain drivers from the logging requirement.

With the consolidation of 57 federal grant programs into nine new block grants, the required paperwork will be reduced this year by 83%, or 5.4 million work hours.

Further cuts in paperwork will be tougher to make. That's because so much of it is linked to deeply entrenched procedures and programs. In some cases, new legislation will be required to ease the load.

OMB's paper-cutters are making heartening headway. Let's hope they'll carry on the fight against governmental paper flow with redoubled zeal.





THE TALKIES

POP'S DINER

by Martha Bayles

No doubt about it, diners are in. From the trendy Empire Diner in Manhattan to the photo-realist paintings of John Baeder, the roadside diner has gone the way of the Burma-Shave sign and the Superman comic: It has become transmuted into art. It is strange how we Americans tend to fixate on certain objects, like diners, which are too old to look new, but too gimmicky-commercial to look old. Some say that this is the essence of pop art: that when a Campbell's Soup can is placed in an art gallery the familiarity wears off, and we can appreciate its purely visual qualities. When the same kind of transmutation is effected by both a change of context and the passage of time, the best phrase for it is pop nostalgia.

Barry Levinson's hit movie *Diner*, about five young men coming of age in Baltimore in 1959, applies pop nostalgia to the details of the era's material culture. For one thing, it alters our perception by using a modern palette, cool and blue, at the opposite end of the spectrum from the warm, garish colors found in films made during the fifties. From the dark red lipstick of the women to the streamlined stainless steel of the diner where the men spend their nights, the fifties look much more aesthetic with all the yellow filtered out. And the shapes of things, notably cars, are photographed from an unusual middle distance which accentuates every bulge of chrome and obliquity of tailfin.

It is important to recall that, with regard to objects, pop nostalgia does not really deride; it appreciates. *Diner* looks back with great sweetness and affection on rock 'n' roll, pink flamingos, and stores where you can't buy a TV set without a hi-fi built in. Unfortunately, however, we are living in an age where pop nostalgia is considered a valid way to look not only at objects, but at people. And when it does, it comes closer to the satirical side of pop art. Anyone who has read a review of this movie will

know that its theme is not merely objects. In the words of Pauline Kael: "*Diner* is a great period piece—a look at middle-class relations between the sexes just before the sexual revolution." Levinson couldn't say it any better himself, although he tries: "Today women have an awareness of themselves. Guys have the beginning of an awareness of women. But at that time there wasn't any awareness. There was no understanding at all."

When artist and critic agree, how can the audience fail to go along? In Boston, *Diner* is playing at the sort of theater that sells home-baked cookies and distributes copies of Kael's review to its patrons, so that by the time the lights go down, we are all prepared to sit back and watch the sexism. Right away a character named Boog, who sports a magnificent DA, places a bet with his diner buddies that the local ice maiden will touch his penis while watching a movie (which just happens to be A

Summer Place with Troy Donahue and Sandra Dee: a classic piece of late-fifties titillation). Amid smirks and guffaws, Boog accomplishes the task inside a popcorn box strategically placed on his lap—and everyone over thirteen in today's movie audience affirms that this is not an enlightened way to relate to a woman. Another character, Eddie, who is an avid football fan, makes his fiancée pass a test on the subject before allowing the wedding, where the bridesmaids wear the colors of the Baltimore Colts. Shrevie, who is already married, warns Eddie that when a couple can get unlimited sex, there's nothing left to talk about. A fourth character expresses concern that his girl will have to quit a job she enjoys to marry him—to which one of the buddies retorts, "Aw, why complicate the issue by dragging her into it?"

I must say that at first it seemed odd that these incidents are all supposed to be occurring within the same brief span of days, to young men all in their early twenties. Surely

the popcorn caper, and a fifth character selling his date for five dollars at a dance, belongs to a more pubescent stage of development than anxieties about marriage—or in the case of Boog, a certain gallantry based on sexual experience which he displays toward the end of the film. Then I realized that this is pop nostalgia at work, not just on the visual level, but on the narrative level. By throwing together every leer, fear, and adolescent prank he can think of, Levinson flattens his characters into a set of predictable attitudes: a cartoon version of a period in his life that, in other respects, he obviously wishes to render in depth.

This is the element of satire, and of course we should expect it from a man who (judging from his remarks) belongs to a whole generation of reconstructed male chauvinists, not to mention the women who worked so hard to reconstruct them. Stanley Kauffmann speaks for all such people when he deplores "the American male's hatred / fear of women," and solemnly reminds us that "clear signs of contemporary change in these attitudes are growing, but those attitudes in their earlier, pure state are the locus of *Diner*." Barry Levinson is certainly not the first filmmaker to look back on his youth and say, "Gee, how unenlightened we all were." He may, however, be the first to depict unenlightenment in this particular pop nostalgic way. And the fact that he does so may be the secret of his success. For I suspect that today's young audience enjoys *Diner* precisely because, along with the yellow, the solemnity has been filtered out.

My evidence for this is scanty—just an impression, from teaching college freshmen, that although they offer lip service to the values of the women's movement, the present student cohort is just a little bit sick of it all. I saw *Diner* in the aforementioned theater when it was full of college students, and couldn't help noticing how utterly delighted they all were by this outrage to their



Martha Bayles is film critic of The American Spectator.

carefully nurtured antisexist sensibilities. Some laughed so hard they almost choked on their cookies. They were also watching a movie about their parents' generation, which no doubt added to their amusement. But that is another reason why the pop nostalgic approach is so effective: Like pop art, it gives the appearance of satire without being awfully clear about what, in fact, it is satirizing.

Diner presents an array of charming, basically sympathetic characters who engage in the forbidden pleasures of male bonding, sex jokes, and what Kauffmann calls "the deer-park mentality; women as the hunting preserve of men." The attitudes behind these pleasures are spoofed; but in a way, so is the idea that people who behave in such ways are so terrible. The guys in the diner are lovable, and even the girls surprise

us at the end when, at Eddie's wedding, the bouquet is thrown and they all reach up with delicate white-gloved hands: not to catch it, but to keep it airborne long enough to land on the table where our heroes are sitting. It's hard not to feel at this stage that the whole thing is a put-on—of everyone, including Pauline Kael and Stanley Kauffmann. It may be that Levinson has pulled an Andy Warhol without fully realizing it. For

the essence of pop art—and pop nostalgia—is not really satire, as many people think. Satire is quickly blunted by nostalgia and appreciation. Placing a soup can in an art gallery invites us to laugh at the soup can, but also at the art gallery. By trying to make fun of both, it doesn't say a whole lot about either. But if we know what's good for us, we won't point that out. We'll just stand there and smile. □



AMERICA'S ROYALIST UNDERGROUND

by T. John Jamieson

The principal feast of the American civil religion is upon us. True patriots will roast hot dogs and risk dismemberment from the use of firecrackers; even cynical leftists who, during Vietnam, refused to stand for the national anthem at high school assemblies will play Frisbee and light up a joint. Local demagogues will invoke the ghosts of Washington and Jefferson and modestly concede that, in their case at least, "democracy works." A few men and women of intellect and imagination, though inwardly dissenting, will outwardly conform to custom in order not to give offense to relatives, or else they will cultivate their gardens alone. These are Tories, adherents of the politics of throne and altar, feeling no less American and no less patriots for knowing what the civil war of 1775-81 was really about. For them, July is the cruelest month: After Independence Day comes Bastille Day, and then the anniversary of the Czar's murder, to say nothing of the July monarchy.

In their frustration with the current constitutional arrangement, which most of them regard as a necessary evil, these American royalists have created an international historical cult which embraces all forms of the lost cause of legitimism and which champions every dynasty. Some have reconciled themselves to the Whig constitution of 1787, but give free rein to their fantasy outside the national border. Among these are Russell Kirk and Frederick Wilhelm-

T. John Jamieson is a Paul Elmer More Scholar residing in Livonia, Michigan.

sen. Kirk, who has characterized himself as a Bohemian Tory, advocates the politics of prescription, and, like his mentor T.S. Eliot, believes that nations which have a king should continue to have one. Wilhelmson, the great Thomist of the University of Dallas, actively involved himself in the movement for the Spanish restoration—except that his candidate was not Juan Carlos, but Francisco Javier of Bourbon-Parma, the Carlist claimant; for his pains, the American professor was dubbed by the old pretender in 1975 a Knight of the Grand Cross of the Proscribed Legitimacy. Dr. Sir Frederick Wilhelmson continues to lead Carlists, both in Spain and Latin America, whose political aims have not yet been reached.

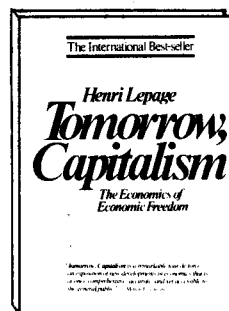
Most American royalists are Anglophile Jacobites; some, with varying degrees of seriousness, advocate an American throne and would unwrite 1776 altogether. They live vicariously through the study of British and Canadian politics. Mr. Daniel MacGregor of Chicago is the American correspondent of *Monarchy Canada*, the well-produced magazine of the Monarchist League of Canada. Mr. Jay Stribling of El Paso helped found while in college a Society of St. Charles the Martyr which publicly deplored the regicide as the foundation of twentieth-century totalitarianism and issued buttons bearing the legend, "RESTORE THE MONARCHY." Anglican Catholics, those Non-Jurors of the present, who refuse to swear by the do-it-yourself liturgy and the bisexual priesthood of modern Episcopalianism, have a habit of naming their parishes after

such royal saints as Charles and Edward the Confessor and Margaret of Scotland. Somewhere along the way they seem to have heard that James I once said, "No bishops, no king." Since there are bishops (and the Anglican Catholics breed them prodigiously), they infer, there must be a king somewhere. And there used to be a Reverend Wiebe in San Francisco, allegedly Episcopalian, who established a Monarchist League of America whose manifesto advocated the installation of a king in

America by A.D. 2000, preferably a cadet of the House of Windsor. Gordon Haff of the *Dartmouth Review* recently came out of the regalia closet; and elder literary statesman Austin Warren would like to be ruled by a native dynasty either of Jameses or Adamsons.

I once knew a protégé of Russell Kirk, a fellow American, who while studying at St. Andrew's University in Scotland became head of the local

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chapter of the Monarchist League—the international organization, that is, founded by the Marquis of Bristol. I have corresponded with a lady political science professor who is writing a book on the Kaiser and describes herself as a *frondeuse*, and also with an attorney of Irish descent who is a knight of the Royal Yugoslavian Order of St. John. The American monarchist is not simply an eccentric; he or she is a sophisticated, complex intellectual being whose faculty of moral imagination is extraordinarily well developed and requires more room in which to play than democracy provides. You will no doubt ask, how did the American monarchist get this way?

A literary education may be to blame; Plato, Cicero, and Shakespeare are very hard on democracy, and influenced the Founding Fathers against majoritarian rule as much as the mob politics of 17th- and 18th-century England. For the aesthetically inclined, the world's greatest period of artistic production, the Baroque, chiefly exalts the politics of throne and altar; I found myself thoroughly propagandized recently, at an exhibition of 18th-century Neapolitan art, by an "Allegory of the Origin of the Arms of Bourbon," which showed an enormous azure cartouche borne among the clouds by an angelic host, with one seraph affixing three gold *fleurs-de-lys* thereto. On a pragmatic basis, one might simply realize that the Reagan

victory of 1980 cannot vindicate the democratic system if 51 percent of the electorate believe in flying saucers. Granted, one cannot fool all the people all the time, but what is the consolation in that?

Born of such influences and realizations is a conviction at once philosophical, religious, practical, and sentimental in nature. The American monarchist finds no outlet for this conviction in the real world of affairs; but he would tell you that this sense of participatory void is only the democratic habit of mind, for democracy requires an unwholesome degree of politicization in its citizenry. Nevertheless, what can he do? He reads *Oliver Wiswell* and studies genealogical charts; he attends the annual lectures of Dr. Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn, who castigates America for ruining Europe with its postwar reconstruction plans based on the Divine Right of Majorities. He spurns the great unwashed and cultivates the valiantly unreconstructed—exiles and émigrés. Many of these are proud aristocrats who have preserved their lofty pretensions against all odds; they continue to profess the royal principle. I know of an Austro-Franco-Bavarian baron of 64 quarters living in California who is a *blanc des blancs* of French Royalism. An Italian-American friend of mine whose people have been gentlemen for the last eight centuries recently received the title of count from his personal *fons hon-*

orum, the exiled King Umberto II. This man is also a Mayflower descendant.

Among the various nationalities which have sought refuge on our shores while preserving the "unreconstructed" stance and looking toward eventual restoration and repatriation, the most organized and visible are the Russians. The Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia, which has annually held a solemn memorial for Nicholas II on the anniversary of his assassination at Ekaterinburg, has at last canonized him. The Order of Russian Imperial Union, whose president is Mr. Peter Koltypin of Connecticut, hails H.I.H. Grand Duke Wladimir Romanov as Czar; the autocratic Wladimir has even graced its assemblies with his presence. The Order maintains a fund to finance anti-Communist propaganda in the USSR. In New York City may be found the All-Russian Monarchist Front which engages in similar activity. The Hoover Institution at Stanford is reputedly another Czarist center. Any attempt to dismiss the Czarism of the exiles must take into account the fact that, in Russia herself, discontent under the Communist tyranny is crystallizing as a powerful nostalgia for the nineteenth century in general, and for the Czar in particular. There is an emerging cult of the royal martyr.

Many more hidden pockets of

American royalism exist than can here be exposed. I suspect that the "patriotic" societies harbor a few monarchists, for I have known several *penitent* sons of the Revolution; and the aristocratic Cincinnati, composed of descendants of George Washington's officers, though they are devoutly anti-Hanoverian, have Louis XVI for their patron. Any Roman Catholic infallibilist is on principle an adherent of an ecclesiastical monarchy; and the Kennedys, their shabbiness notwithstanding, have filled the psychological vacuum that would otherwise be filled by a royal dynasty. But, by etymology, *Tory* originally meant an Irish papist.

The premier American royalist organization is the Constantian Society, whose name is derived from the Latin word for constancy, founded twelve years ago by Randall J. Dicks, a Pittsburgh attorney. It publishes the *Constantian*, has approximately 400 members, and takes for its mission the education of the public on monarchy. Its literature says that "monarchy is an intelligible and honest form of government, and it is our belief that it is better suited and able to serve the common good under future conditions than any other."

The Whig Burke called the adherents of divine right "exploded fanatics of slavery"; even the Tory Johnson conceded that "a high Tory makes government unintelligible—it is lost in the clouds." But that is the worst that can be said of monarchism. Far worse things may be said of decadent democracies sinking under the combined weight of demagoguery, bureaucracy, and judicial usurpation. Whatever may be said for the relevance of monarchy to universal human nature, the relevance of democracy to most national characters and historical contexts is very little. Yet America confers legitimacy on the world's rulers in terms of its own civil religion in the same self-righteous manner as the Popes once crowned the royal majesties of Europe. In fact, we literally crowned the Communist regime in Hungary in 1978 by yielding the nine-hundred-year-old Crown of St. Stephen to Kadar; it had been kept since World War II in protective custody at Fort Knox, awaiting happier days for Hungary. Its rightful owner, of course, is not Kadar, but rather Archduke Otto von Hapsburg, who today is a representative for Bavaria in the new European Parliament.

Czar Simeon II of the Bulgarians continues to press his claim, and King Michael of Rumania has re-

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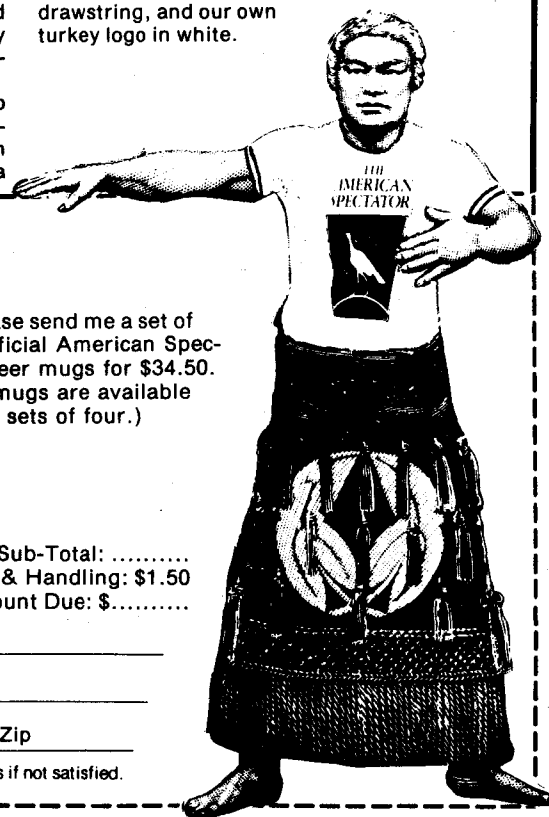
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cantly announced his readiness to return to the throne if he is called. With the rise of unrest in these captive nations where the memory of royal rule is still fresh, can American foreign policy refuse to address the potential for restoration? In Greece the king is still talked of. Following the example of Spain, Portugal may be the next European nation to return to monarchy. As the Reagan Administration belabors the distinction between "authoritarian" and "totalitarian" regimes, and as commentators mull over the moral compromise in supporting Fascist dictatorships, the self-defeating futility of seeking to appease Marxist juntas, and the infeasibility of setting up democracies in backward nations, why is there no discussion of monarchy? A

worthwhile project for the American monarchist is to raise the historical consciousness of American foreign policy to the level of recognizing foreign monarchies as a valid possibility. He must work to establish three essential facts:

First, *all monarchies are constitutional monarchies*; and under every constitution sovereignty ultimately rests somewhere. So long as the royal hand is able to intervene in moments of crisis, the specific machinery of administration is not all that important. Our own form of elective monarchy exists in perpetual crisis: Its sovereign dies every four years without issue.

Second, *popular elections have no relevance to the issue of restoration or continuation of monarchy*, since

elections divide people, and the most stable regimes are imposed from above or from outside. The Allies insisted on an election in Italy after World War II, which Umberto would have won if it had been conducted fairly; yet by exposing the royal principle to discussion, the potential hold of the king over his government was thoroughly eroded. Renewing the social contract is not optional: Let those skeptics who say that every tenet of belief must always be open to discussion retire to the philosophy classroom and impose on the world no longer.

Third, *new monarchies can be fostered in the same way that the old once were*. When a national hero, a liberator, or a patriarch has the support to establish a dynasty, who

are the Americans that they should stop him? Such was the father of the late Shah of Iran; and our own George Washington nearly had the crown thrust upon him.

If America could redeem Eastern Europe from its Communist slave-masters through royal restoration, it would be an act of historical penance. Meanwhile, the flame of hereditary legitimacy, the secular form of the apostolic succession, continues to burn, tended by patriots, priests, and professors, who privately confess their belief in the sacramental nature of power.

No, the American monarchist is not Independence Day's Scrooge, yet to the democrats he repeats the ancient curse: "May you have an equal in your house." □

C O R R E S P O N D E N C E

Friends of Ayn Rand

Aram Bakshian, Jr.'s caricature (*TAS*, May 1982) of the "frigid," "faddish," "one-dimensional," "dogmatic," "rigid," "shrill," "pontificating," "dreadfully earnest," "tyrannical," "silly," "crankish," "limited," "seldom original," and "seldom right" person many of us know as Ayn Rand (but whom he identifies as "a long-winded messiah minus a god," "a grand inquisitor," and "an old trout") doesn't really help us understand her impact or analyze the value of her ideas. In fact, these comments are as useful in helping us understand Rand as comments by other writers in other journals about Thomas Sowell's "blackface sociology," "vituperative attacks," and alleged belief in the genetic inferiority of black people are in understanding Sowell (*TAS*, May 1982).

Rand had faults, but she also made some critical contributions to the history of philosophizing about individual rights. Her accomplishments as a writer and a thinker, and the clear impact she has had on thousands of people, deserve thoughtful analysis, not diatribes full of unenlightening name-calling.

—Leslie Graves Key
Madison, Wisconsin

Aram Bakshian's posthumous "tribute" to Ayn Rand (May 1982), a lengthy recital of invective and obloquy directed at the late Ms. Rand's person, writing, ideas, and followers, was pointless, tasteless, and cowardly.

It seems to me that non-Liberals

committed to economic and political freedom should expend their energies vindicating these beliefs instead of engaging in ad hominem, internecine attacks on one another.

—Mark S. Pulliam
Los Angeles, California

I was heartily disappointed by the article in your May issue on the recently deceased American philosopher Ayn Rand. By systematically presenting Miss Rand's ideas out of context, your writer seeks to discredit one of the finest minds free enterprisers have ever had on their side.

It is ironic that Mr. Bakshian's vicious smear job showed up only scant pages away from Thomas Sowell's excellent piece on "media smears." Clearly, Bakshian is an expert at the art.

If only he'd had the minimal decency to make his attacks on a victim who was still alive and could thus set the record straight.

—Christina Spencer
Ottawa, Canada

P.S. Based on that article, I'd like you to cancel my subscription and refund the unexpired portion of it. I was looking to *The American Spectator* for informed conservative comment. A publication that would permit Mr. Bakshian's article to appear may be conservative, but it's not too informed.

Aram Bakshian's "tribute" to Ayn Rand ("Ayn Rand, R.I.P.," *TAS*, May 1982) was an uncontrolled torrent of venom that revealed far more about Bakshian than about Rand. We are told that Ayn Rand was an "old

trout" whose works lacked artistic merit and who preyed on middle-class adolescents suffering from frayed self-esteem—"the impotent in search of omnipotence" and "hypochondriacs who blamed the outer world for internal inadequacies of their own making or imagining." In the full heat of his tantrum, Bakshian even likens Objectivism to Marxist Leninism and Scientology. And when he leaves off such rantings long enough to mention any of Rand's ideas, he misrepresents those ideas, adding intellectual dishonesty to insult.

But as irony would have it, an observation Rand made about the 1964 Republican National Convention also puts an embarrassingly cold light on Bakshian's spitting, seething hatred:

When men feel that strongly about an issue, yet refuse to name it, when they fight savagely for some seemingly incoherent, unintelligible goal—one may be sure that their actual goal would not stand public identification.

I will not bore your readers by drawing the obvious conclusion.

—David Thomasson
Columbia, Missouri

Aram Bakshian, Jr. replies:

I think the rabid tone of these letters speaks far more eloquently than I could for the paranoid reaction of hard-core Randians to any sort of criticism. The fact is that, while I do think Ayn Rand was a bit of a crank and a rather unappealing character as she grew more and more dictatorial in her world view, I also credited her in my piece with having made a number of valid points

against liberal-collectivist altruism.

It also happens that I don't think she was much of an artist and I proceeded to cite examples of her inadequacies as a novelist and critic (none of which the correspondents refute in their outpourings of wrath). How, to a really *objective* objectivist, any of what I wrote could be characterized as a "tantrum" or "spitting, seething hatred" is beyond me. Just as Miss Rand aroused little enthusiasm on my part, she aroused no hatred. I never thought her ideas, her writing, or her self were intellectually or morally substantial enough to warrant a strong emotional reaction. The worst I ever felt about any of them was—and is—a mild distaste.

It does occur to me, though, that if Mr. Thomasson and some of the other respondents are typical of the acolytes Miss Rand has left behind, she may have more to answer for than I originally thought. To borrow a phrase from Mr. Thomasson, "I will not bore your readers by drawing the obvious conclusions."

Truth Be Said

I have sometimes heard it said that the Israelis are similar to the Nazis in their treatment of the Palestinian Arabs but I have been reluctant to believe it. Then I read Mitchell Ross's article on Professor Edward Said (*TAS*, May 1982). Mr. Ross's
(continued on page 37)

The American Spectator welcomes correspondence from its readers. Please limit your comments to 200 words, and include full name, address, and telephone number.

BOOK REVIEWS

Jeffrey Bernard and Taki are two of the hottest tickets in British journalism. They write for the *Spectator* of London, in whose venerable ecru pages they stand out like a couple of yobbos looking for a brawl. They approach BritLit's favorite medium, the essay, with the instincts of a Westbrook Pegler. They throw open the door and blurt it out. This may explain why they are so popular in a country that produces graceful and witty essayists in job lots but very few exciting ones.

Taki—he uses only the one name—writes a column called “High Life,” based on his ongoing adventures as the playboy younger son of one of the Greek shipping tycoons, John Theodoracopulos. Bernard writes the complementary column, “Low Life,” based on his adventures as a drunk, a debtor, a cad, a sloth, a loser, a failure. He does it so well, however, to such applause, he may be writing himself out of a role.

Both writers subvert the customary literary approaches to the upper and lower orders. Taki tells his readers that, contrary to what they may have read in the *New Statesman*, the *Spectator*'s IngSoc (English Socialist) rival, rich people are on the whole more pleasant and more admirable than other people. He cheerfully reports that his own family, the Theodoracopuloses, are worth much more than the 200 million pounds mentioned in Nigel Dempster's gossip column.

True, Taki indulges in the perfectly conventional British sport of ridiculing the *nouveaux riches*, but he has no use for the standard British weapons of subtlety, irony, and the snigger. Taki prefers hyperbole and outrageous directness. In “High Life” rich Italians are fat and cowardly. Taki's fellow rich Greeks are fat and gauche and have repulsive fat children. Americans—or rich Americans in London, at any rate—are thin and stringy. They have grown prematurely old from jogging every morning at dawn, imitating the speech and dress of the English upper classes all day, and cringing

*To order, send a check for \$15.00 to Jay Landesman, Ltd., 8 Duncan Terrace, London N1, England.

Tom Wolfe is author, most recently, of *From Bauhaus to Our House*.

HIGH LIFE / LOW LIFE

Jeffrey Bernard and Taki / Jay Landesman, Ltd. / 6.95 pounds*

Tom Wolfe

every night before their own hideous snarling wives, who free-base testosterone.

At Taki's favorite seaside resort, Vouliagmeni, ten miles east of Athens, once the very picture of quiet luxury, he now finds himself shank to flank with rich Arabs “who keep spitting in front of my cabana as if it were a spittoon. Their children do biggies in the swimming pool and the place has to be drained after every meal.”

Every daughter of the rich wears “a pair of tight jeans with pencil-thin legs, a hot-green tube top, a purple belt, a yellow plastic bracelet, high-heeled shoes, frizzy hair and two bright spots of pink rouge on her cheeks. She could be the daughter of a duke or a postman. One could never tell them apart.” All of them, young, old, Arabs, Greeks, Englishmen, Americans, the lot, are sinking into the ooze of their own rhinal catarrh,

thanks to the only thing in the world they are willing to die for: cocaine. No sane person, says Taki, goes into the lavatory of a chic nightclub anywhere in the West without “a surgical mask as if in an asbestos plant during an explosion. Masses of humanity sniff, snort, sneeze, cough and expectorate. One popular London club has even taken out the toilet bowls as redundant.”

Clubs and resorts are Taki's favorite settings. Through them scamper such characters as Bianca Jagger, who he insists is ancient, Halston, whom he calls “Dracula,” Diane von Furstenberg, who he says is a nonentity from Belgium who trades (in the rag trade) on the name of the “gay prince” she married, and John Aspinall, a gambling club operator and wild animal tamer whom he admires. In fact, Taki relishes it all, and his hyperbole often takes off into marvelous deliriums reminiscent of

Céline's *Death on the Installment Plan* or a Gillray tableau.

But through the caricature runs a cold vein. There is a touch of Mishima about Taki (who named the yachts his father gave him *Bushido I* and *Bushido II*). After long nights of wrenching his reticular formation out of shape at Annabel's and Xenon, he is in a mood to insist on patriotism and the warrior virtues of honor, courage, manliness, physical prowess, and chivalry. Taki is himself a karate adept and tennis star who has represented Greece in both sports in international games. In 1980, at the age of 43, he fought in a New York Athletic Club boxing tournament in the middleweight division.

He is one of the few highly vocal foes of feminism outside the ranks of the Upland Baptists. Last year his article in *The American Spectator* called “Ugly Women”—arguing that ugly thoughts and shrill voices turn the good looks of women like Jane Fonda and Shirley MacLaine into revolting masks—provoked feminist groups to protests and manifestos. In Taki's book the ultimate decadence of people of wealth and power consists of caving in to feminism, pacifism, or other forms of Left chic rather than defending their own values or even their own class interests. To Taki the question of what, besides cocaine, the rich people of the West might be willing to die for is not funny. An underlying fury at the sight of the West suffocating in its own flab puts iron in the soul of his wild gift for farce and insult.

Meantime, Jeffrey Bernard's “Low Life” is scarcely what Orwell, Steinbeck, or the proletarian novelists had in mind when they wrote about being down and out in the 1930s. Bernard often makes note of his own appearance. His hair is “the color of man-made ice” and loaded with dandruff, and a dentist has informed him that all of his top teeth will have to come out on March 20. “When I think of what my body and I have gone through over the past 45 years, I should have thought it would have the decency to hang on a little longer—at least until the hot weather started. It is not a pretty sight. Starting at the top, the memory banks are now completely empty, the concentration fuses have blown and only a few basic animal instincts remain. Fleeting moments of lust and



greed occasionally threaten to turn the motor over but the spark is weak."

Many columns begin with our half-toothless hero sitting in a saloon in the middle of the day. The most ordinary barroom touches irritate him, starting with the sign behind the bar: "You don't have to be mad to work here, but it helps." The regulars at the bar are saying: "Squire—neck of the woods—ding dong (for Bells whisky)—my better half—tincture—at this moment in time—gee and tee—long time no see—I've only got one pair of hands—similar?—don't tell my bank manager—cold enough for you?" The barmaid is saying: "Plenty of work about for you, Jeff? No? I should have thought you'd be doing very well. But it's the same for all of us really, isn't it? I mean there just isn't the money about, is there? Mind you, it's all right for some, I dare say; farmers and suchlike. No, when you think what a pound's worth today, well. Funny though, I should have thought those magazines and things you write for, I should have thought they'd pay very well. No? Of course, you know what you ought to do? I'll tell you. You should write a book. I'll tell you what. If I could write I'd sit down and write a book. God, the stories I could tell."

Then the "TV commercial boys" come in and start saying, "Yes, I know, love, but if we cut it there—bang, bang—we wouldn't have to hold him in long shot coming down those stairs looking so dreadfully bored. Let's face it, loves, we're here, basically, to sell the wretched stuff." "I couldn't agree more. No, Basil's right. Cut it and let's scrap the dissolve. Incidentally, did you see Richard Three last night? My God. Of course, basically, it's a really boring play, particularly if it isn't done well, but I thought . . ."

For some reason this drives him to the edge. "For the umpteenth time in six months I make a mental note to ask some bright spark like Bron Waugh to write a piece actually attacking those people who keep using the word basically when it's not necessary. . . . It makes me think they're all talking a different language which, at this moment in time, basically, is what it's all about. I mean, I know you've got to let it all hang out and stay loose which is quite incredible and absolutely amazing in a basic sort of way, basically, that is, but it's really beginning to bug me. Basically, I'm pretty tolerant but if I go on hearing that word I think I might flip. I mean it's really draggy and, basically, out."

Then it dawns on you that you have

been skillfully drawn into the mental atmosphere of a man with a terrific hangover. Like most aching drunks he tries to transform what is really troubling him into those demons, Other People, the people who say "Similar?" when they mean "Have another?" and "basically" when they mean "I dare say." Every so often, however, comes a column in which Bernard—or the main character of "Low Life" he has turned himself into—confronts himself directly. He tells about the moment, the final five or ten minutes, in which he breaks up with a girlfriend of long standing. What troubles him most of all is his inability to summon up any emotion. After she left "I felt strangely ashamed at not being more upset so I put some Mahler on the record player to see if that would provoke the appropriate misery. Nothing. In fact, I sat there listening to the syrup feeling distinctly irritated."

What Bernard has done is create a low life that is more dreadful to the readers of the *Spectator* of London (or Bloomington) than visions of the slums or the Third World. His world is that of the failed middle-class intellectual. His columns are like slices of the novel he says he is going to write and keeps cadging advances for and never sits down to. He has taken the intellectual's gamble—cut his ties with conventional life in favor of dreams of low-wattage glory—and lost. He is finally cut off even from the commonplace emotions that would let him feel properly sorry for himself.

It is here that Bernard's low life and Taki's high life converge. Both are writing about the *homo novus* of the twentieth century, the smart number who is too befuddled and deracinated to fight back, even when pushed to the wall. The remarkable thing, in England, is to find two gifted writers who are able to bring that character alive in such an uninhibited way.

But Taki and Bernard have an

In keeping with *The American Spectator's* long-standing campaign to improve human understanding throughout the world, the editors are pleased to announce that Taki has become our European Editor. Beginning in the early fall, Professor Taki will auspicate a column of political analysis from his offices in Athens, London, Gstaad, and Monte Carlo.

advantage over their colleagues: Neither has ever attended a major English university. Most bright young writers in England go to universities such as Oxford and Cambridge, which operate on the tutorial system. Every week the student writes an essay and then reads it out loud to his tutor, his don, a figure of maturity, sophistication, and certified wisdom. Nothing is more embarrassing, when prose is read aloud—particularly in England, to a don—than purple passages, leaps of the imagination that fall flat, elaborate word play, leg-slappers, slang, sentiment, personal revelations, obvious emotions, or excessive effects of any sort. The mooncalf intellectual is soon operantly conditioned, as the psychologists say, to avoid such areas altogether. After three years of it he is likely to turn into a polite essayist of consummate grace and wit who will never embar-

rass himself or a publisher in print for the rest of his days. His chances of becoming a good novelist or a lively journalist, however, are remote. The field demonstration of the above is the past eighty-two years of British history. In this century there have been scarcely half a dozen British novelists or playwrights of the first rank who have come from out of the great tutorial universities. After John Galsworthy and Evelyn Waugh the list peters out rapidly. Orwell, Shaw, O'Casey, Joyce, Lawrence, Maugham, Pinter, Burgess, Behan, and Conrad, like Dickens, Hardy, and Kipling before them, were spared the opportunity.

Jeffrey Bernard, who dropped out of Britain's Naval College, and Taki, who bounced around schools in Europe and America, are English journalism's latest evidence of the exuberant literary life just over the buttressed walls. □

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STEAMING TO BAMBOOLA

Christopher Buckley

Congdon & Lattès, dist. by St. Martin's Press / \$14.95

Geoffrey Norman

A few years ago, I advised Christopher Buckley not to write this book. We were working for a magazine in New York, going all over the world to write stories. He wrote about the King of Spain and about Alexander Haig when he was still a mere four-star general. I wrote about Rhodesia and other matters. One day when we were having a drink at one of those mid-town places that we went to, Buckley told me that he was thinking about a book.

I said that sounded like a good idea. You couldn't write magazine stories forever. What was this book going to be "about"?

Well, he said, he had this idea; one that had been brewing with him for a long time. He wanted to sign on a merchant ship and write about it. A whole book.

I said something like: "Ah . . . yes, well, er, don't you think it might be a little, uh . . . dull? And you know, Chris, the thing with the sea; it has been done."

He said he had thought about that but he still felt he could write a good book. The subject, he said, had a special resonance for him.

I decided not to insist. You can't

Geoffrey Norman is contributing editor at Esquire.

tell a friend not to marry the woman even when you know he shouldn't. But I happen to know that people with far more experience in publishing than I, did insist. They all agreed: You just couldn't make that book sing. Nobody would want to read it in the eighties. What Chris needed, they all said, was something "hot." Not, for God's sake, the journal of a young man's voyage to nowhere on some tramp steamer.

Buckley listened politely to all of them—he never listens any other way—then went out and signed up for his cruise. Everyone chalked it up to youth and went on looking for the right society murder or Washington scandal. They knew what makes great books. Buckley merely did what great writers must do; he listened to his muse and obeyed his heart. Then he went out and wrote a great book.

Now, there are by rough count some fifteen or twenty thousand "great books" published every year . . . if you believe the publishers. But this one really is great simply because it makes you feel a world and care about it intensely when you thought that world had passed into the realm of cliché; that it could not be done again.

Buckley calls his ship the *Columbianna*. (The name—most names—are inventions.) It sailed from Charleston, South Carolina to Bremerhaven. Buckley was ruthless in his selection. He wanted an ordinary ship on an ordinary cruise. It was as though anything out of the ordinary would have distracted him, caught his relentlessly observant eye, and taken it off the proper object of his study—ordinary men and ordinary ships. A good eye finds personality—character—where others see only the ordinary. Here is Buckley on his ship's plumbing:

She still had her original plumbing. Each toilet was possessed by a different daemon. One made an exploding sound when flushed, followed by a raucous sucking noise. Another needed seven or eight flushes before it would swallow even a cottonball. Another emitted two bangs, three seconds apart, every time it was flushed. At one time the Chief Mate's did not stop flushing for a month and two days. The men from the engine room went at it but could do nothing. Then suddenly one day, it ceased gurgling, and let the Chief Mate alone.

You begin, as you find yourself absorbed by this narrative, to understand the affection and the loathing that sailors often feel for their ships. Then, you begin to feel a little of both for *this* ship. But Buckley is just getting started when he gives it his graceful attention. If you've ever wondered about how ships were named, you will learn from this book in one of the single funniest chapters of prose you are likely to read. One item:

During the Spanish-American War, the navy got the idea to honor American colleges and so two ships were rechristened the *Yale* and the *Harvard*. After Admiral Dewey captured the Spanish

fleet in the Battle of Manila, he received orders to give the ships collegiate names. He wired back two proposals: *Massachusetts Institute of Technology* and *Vermont Normal College for Women*. Washington got the message and the admiral was not asked for further suggestions . . .

The book is full of appropriate learning and erudition. Buckley would probably be qualified to teach Melville; few have quoted him to better effect. He also knows the history of the American Merchant Marine and tells it with touching economy in a sketch of the late Paul Hall, president of the Seafarers International Union. He knows about captains who are good at sinking ships for the insurance money. He visits a place called Snug Harbor in North Carolina. It is a gem of an old folks home, full of retired seamen living on memories and calling each other "Captain." This section is nearly heartbreaking . . . and very funny.

All of this is first-rate stuff, done with great care and enough to make the book diverting and even memorable by itself. But it is all extra. What Buckley does with remarkable grace and sensitivity is reveal the men on the ship. They are every bit as forlorn as the seamen of Melville or Conrad's time but still as admirable, in an odd way, for their ability to endure. They are tough drinkers and dopers, most of them, bitter and fatalistic. Maybe it is what time at sea does to a man, but they all seem to see themselves plainly. Except for two or three genuine psychos, they have no illusions about themselves. Buckley lets them talk:

"In the merchant marine you're married to the ship. She's your wife. But a lot of marriages are not too romantic. It's a marriage of convenience. I mean—it's been good to me. I reflect back. I worked for a typewriter factory, sold encyclopedias, drove a truck, worked on farms—which I hated with a passion. Insane asylum. Worked in an insane asylum. Worked in a rest home. The army.

"I don't have too much of a future. Those that have no past have a very limited future. I don't have enough brains to do anything else. When I was thirteen, I think it was, they had me down as a mental defective in the orphanage because of running away. They figured I had to be defective mentally because why would I want to run away from a nice orphanage?

"I'm very fatalistic about it. You're born, you live, you die."

There are a dozen good characters in this book and, while you probably wouldn't want to run into most of them in a bar, you are grateful to Buckley for letting you get to know

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them. And you are reminded of just how appealing and frightening and sad the humanity in all of us is.

Buckley is writing speeches for George Bush these days. I would have advised against that job too if I

had been asked. But on the evidence of this book, Buckley might even be able to make the Vice President of the United States fresh and interesting. I will never presume to advise Buckley on anything again. And I look forward to his next book as much as I cherish this one. □

TRADITION

Edward Shils / University of Chicago Press / \$20.00

Stephen Miller

Tradition, as Edward Shils says in the preface to his new book, is a "bewildering subject." It can also be a deadly boring subject. One thinks of the solemn defenses of tradition heard at commencement exercises and other ceremonial occasions or the humorless attacks against tradition by those who preach the gospel of liberation. Edward Shils does defend tradition, but his defense is far from boring—mainly because he complicates the notion of tradition in ways that make his argument far more interesting than those of most staunch traditionalists.

The strenuous defense of tradition, Shils observes, is a modern phenomenon—the work of the counter-Enlightenment. Deploring the scientific, rationalistic, and individualistic strains of modern society, many of these writers looked back in nostalgia to pre-industrial societies, which they assumed lived "in a condition of unbroken traditionality." Not so, Shils argues. Far from being locked into traditionality, such societies continually modified their traditions, since questions continually arose for which tradition had no answer.

If traditional societies were not as wedded to tradition as their defenders have suggested, modern societies are far from being completely devoid of traditional elements. All relatively complex societies are shot through with different traditions. "The body of traditions prevailing in a differentiated society," Shils says, "is a very heterogeneous thing." Not only are societies permeated by different traditions, but so too are individuals; one can be a biophysicist (or a hard-nosed businessman for that matter) as well as, say, a devout Roman Catholic. As Shils nicely puts it, we

are all—whether we realize it or not—in the grip of the past; we are all creatures of tradition.

But how can that be, bearing in mind that many regard themselves as resolutely opposed to tradition, which they equate with oppression, ignorance, and superstition? Shils argues that some patterns of thought strongly opposed to what he calls substantive tradition are themselves traditions; there is a scientific tradition, a Marxist tradition, a progressivistic tradition. When someone chooses to embrace one of these he enters into "an already charted territory with its own already established rules, demands, and exigencies."

Shils's notion of antitraditional traditions enables him to question those who make absolute distinctions between scientific and humanistic forms of inquiry. Like the humanist, the scientist never begins from the beginning, since no new knowledge is possible without a grounding in old knowledge. All traditions of inquiry—scientific, humanistic, religious—begin with a study of old knowledge, begin, that is, with a study of the tradition. "A novice in science must master a body of established knowledge which is his tradition just as a novice in training for a religious profession has to do."

Does Shils make too much of the notion of tradition, asking it to do too much explanatory work? At times I find Shils's distinctions somewhat unclear, but generally his approach is appropriate. By dwelling on what we might call the varieties of traditional experience, Shils highlights the absurdity of assuming that we can escape totally from tradition. "Where

could the totally new come from?" he asks. "In fact, no imagination is so free as to be able to contrive something wholly new, comprehensive, and detailed." Everyone, not only those who engage in scholarly inquiry, must rely on tradition. "Most human beings do not have enough imagination to think up an alternative to what is given; nor do they feel an urgent need to think up something new when there is already a pattern at hand." At the very least, tradition is a convenience, something the individual can fall back upon because the idea of continually inventing new ways of doing—or thinking about—things is a terrible burden.

Few people, I think, are strongly opposed to substantive tradition—preferring traditions that are anti-traditional. "Not everyone in society wishes to live according to the emancipatory ideal," Shils says. I would put it another way: Very few people are strongly opposed to traditional ways of doing things. Shils, in fact, exaggerates the extent to which writers of the past 200 years have subscribed to a tradition of genius

whereby the author feels compelled to "do what has not been done before by others. . . ." No significant writer of the last 200 years has been so anti-traditional. Rather, many writers have argued against the dominance of a particular canon of literature—a canon that included Alexander Pope yet left out William Blake. Shils himself acknowledges his debt to T.S. Eliot's writings on tradition, yet Eliot attempted to revise dramatically the traditional canon of English literature.

If Shils makes too much of the anti-traditional animus of the tradition of literary creation, this is nonetheless a minor flaw in a book whose importance cannot be overestimated. For its argument goes against the grain of modern social thought, especially modern sociology. Shils strongly questions the views of a seminal modern thinker whom Shils himself did much to introduce to the American scholarly public: Max Weber. According to Shils, Weber was wrong to assume that traditional beliefs and patterns of thought could not resist

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Stephen Miller is a Resident Fellow at the American Enterprise Institute.

the corrosive power of rationalization. Traditional patterns of thought and feeling have much more staying power than Weber realized; they are continually modified but rarely do they disappear. Those political leaders and intellectuals engaged in a promethean project to bring instant modernization to their countries, Shils says, have been sorely disappointed, unable to "reconcile themselves to the obduracy of the human beings whom they would treat as malleable materials."

But if modernization generally has been unsuccessful, aggravating disorder in nearly every country, the fact that people rarely abandon traditional patterns of thought ought to be good news for the human race. Orwell, it seems, was much too pessimistic in 1984. Individuals of course will break down under torture, others will completely swallow the reigning ideology, but many will resist the ideology of the state, preferring to remain attached to more traditional patterns of thought. A look at modern Russian literature—from Solzhenitsyn to Sinyavsky—reveals that such is the case. Traditions, especially religious traditions, are alive and well. The traditions of rationalization or liberation are embraced by very few people. "Although substantive traditions have been shaken, they have not been obliterated."

Which, for the most part, is a good thing. I say "for the most part" because, as Shils himself makes clear, it would be foolish to endorse the traditionalist point of view totally. "The tradition of emancipation from traditions is also among the precious achievements of our civilization." Traditions always need to be modified and sometimes need to be overthrown, but Shils is certainly right when he says that "a mistake of great historical significance has been made in modern times in the construction of a doctrine which treated traditions as the detritus of the forward movement of society." □

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INSIDE THE IRANIAN REVOLUTION John D. Stempel / Indiana University Press / \$17.50 MISSION TO IRAN William H. Sullivan / W.W. Norton & Co. / \$14.95

Rustam

Can penguins live in a desert? On official holidays, high-ranking Iranian government functionaries and foreign diplomats attended audiences with the late Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi. Imperial Court protocol required participants to wear formal morning suits. This meant a stiff white shirt and bow tie, dark trousers, and long black morning coats. These ceremonies lasted all morning and, given Tehran's climate, often occurred on very hot days. Officials nevertheless stood stiffly erect, perspiring but never protesting, even though the penguin-like outfits did not have a long Iranian pedigree. Such was the order of the day, and the parade continued.

Ceremonies, regardless of their formats, are only part of a diplomat's routine. As far as is known, American diplomats in Iran acquitted themselves well in this respect. But there are two other functions diplomats fulfill.

One function is to provide information and facilitate communications between their home and host governments. This requires diplomats to acquaint themselves with all aspects of their host country. If not prior to arrival, at least shortly thereafter, diplomats must come to understand the politics, culture, and history of the assigned nation. The other function, which may be called the political one, is to advise, cajole, persuade, and, if necessary, threaten the host government. In certain instances, depending on bilateral relations and the political circumstances, this function may expand. A foreign diplomat may find himself a central actor in the domestic politics of the host nation. Hence, books written by diplomats can either provide general information or shed light on the political role,

Rustam is a writer in Cambridge.

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if any, played by the author or his colleagues. (The best diplomatic writing is done by the British, who, even if at times wrong and patronizing, always exhibit a remarkable ability for penetrating a local culture, folklore, and language. Unfortunately, most American diplomatic memoirs read as if written after a long stay not abroad, but in Washington.)

It is with all this in mind that the recent testimonies of two top American diplomats in Iran need to be judged. They may, after all, provide answers to the two questions being posed about the performance of the American diplomats in Iran. Was the American embassy ill-informed about the political currents in Iran during 1978? Did the American diplomats fail to comprehend the situation and in fact, by their actions, undermine an ally?

Inside the Iranian Revolution is by John D. Stempel, who served as deputy chief of the Political Section of the American Embassy in Tehran from 1975 to 1979. He has attempted to provide a general history of recent Iranian politics and describe the role played by the American participants during the revolution. He falls short of both goals. The book is too long, often repetitive, and ultimately unsatisfying. There are factual mistakes. (To cite only two: Cooperation between the clerical and secular opposition did not, as he states, begin in 1963; rather, it had a long lineage going back to 1905; the Shah did not receive an undergraduate education in Switzerland; he only attended secondary school there.)

Stempel's main point is that the revolution in Iran was not preordained, and it could have taken a variety of different routes. So why did it take the Islamic fundamentalist road? Here a series of answers is offered: the Shah's short-sightedness, the military's indecision, the establishment's overconfidence, etc. Stempel is of course correct to point out the missed opportunities, the foolishness of officials, and the

alternative policies not pursued. But one searches in vain for an integration of these factors in this book.

No clear explanation of the secular historical forces at work—such as the emergence for the first time in Iran of a centralized state—or of the sudden and peculiar coalescence of a social, economic, and political crisis is presented. More telling is the absence of any insights into the rich cast of personalities involved. Even the controversial role of Stempel's superior in Tehran, American Ambassador William Sullivan, is glazed over. Stempel's rendition of Sullivan's performance would win an award for diplomatic verbiage. ("The President rejected the Sullivan thesis that the U.S. should take advantage of its historical position and mediate the turmoil, orchestrating an outcome more consistent with American interests in regional stability. . . .")

If Stempel fails to provide an adequate interpretation of events in Iran, what about the political role he as an American diplomat undoubtedly played during 1978 in Iran? Stempel's book unfortunately reveals neither his actions nor his thoughts at the time, and his discussion of the protracted negotiations sounds secondhand. There is one clue to his thinking and actions in a political capacity, but for that one will have to look elsewhere.

In the first week of September 1978, the Iranian government, in response to rising civil unrest, weighed the decision to impose martial law. Given the close relations between Washington and Tehran, the Iranian leadership was anxious to know the American government's attitude. The Carter Administration was a puzzle to the Shah and his advisers. On the one hand, human rights and reduced arms sales were central tenets of the Administration's foreign policy. On the other hand, the President had quite clearly backtracked on pressing these issues in his two meetings with the Shah. Iranian officials felt uneasy about official American opinion, since imposition of martial law would mean bloodshed and far more draconian measures than previous policies involved.

Martial law was declared, bloodshed did ensue, but no national crackdown comparable to recent measures in Poland followed, only a hemorrhaging of concessions which quickly undermined the basis of martial law. Nearly all analysts, including the two authors reviewed here, have noted that the simultaneous attempt at repression and politi-

cal reform was inherently flawed. It is impossible to determine the origins of this policy, but clearly the Shah and his Prime Minister believed in its efficacy.

Did the American representatives in Iran concur on its wisdom? The American embassy papers (parts of which were recently divulged in the *Washington Post*) published after the hostage seizure suggest that they did. They include a memorandum describing Stempel's own meeting with an Iranian official on September 3, 1978, four days before martial law was declared, in which Stempel quotes himself advising that "the [U.S.] government would be sympathetic towards efforts to establish public order if taken within the context of a system which offered ample opportunity for political participation" (italics mine). For unknown reasons, Stempel's book makes no reference to this document or to any private reservation he might have had about this policy, so in tune with Carter crisis diplomacy.

By contrast with Stempel, William Sullivan, American Ambassador to Iran from 1977 to 1979, limits himself to an account of his own political role. He emerges as a shrewd man of wry humor. In *Mission To Iran* he acknowledges having been a novice to the country. His credential for the post, he was told, was his ability to get along with strong men. But Sullivan states that upon arrival in Tehran he realized that "the man to whom I had presented my credentials certainly did not fit into that category."

His book is more appealing than Stempel's. It is shorter, without scholarly pretensions, and full of revealing details on the months prior to the Shah's departure. His account also illustrates the drawback modern communications pose for diplomats caught in a revolutionary situation. In the past an ambassador relied on his own judgment, and did not await instructions from home. Sullivan, however, not only had constantly to seek clearance from Washington, but also to carry out the often conflicting sets of orders issued by the State Department and the National Security Council during the Carter Administration. Indeed, at times it was Iranians who informed Sullivan of the latest Washington power struggle. "When I went to see Zahedi (the Iranian ambassador to Washington who was then, October 1978, temporarily in Tehran), he took me into his study and in his most conspiratorial tone told me that 'Brzezinski has taken over Iran policy.'"

Sullivan informs us that he saw the Shah every other day from September 1978 to January 16, 1979, the date of the Shah's departure. The Shah's mood during this time apparently alternated between periods of moroseness and brief moments of hope. Given the Shah's glumness and his depiction as insecure and vacillatory, Sullivan's reliance on him up to November 1978 seems extraordinary.

Also remarkable is Sullivan's assessment of the Shah's future in the critical months of September-October 1978. He blandly remarks, "... as the months of September and October unfolded, things in Iran went from bad to worse," and leaves it at that.

It is clear, however, that Sullivan, along with many others, was slow in appreciating the continually accelerating tempo of events. According to the embassy papers, Sullivan's reports to Washington remained upbeat up to November 1978. Here is his wishful prognosis of the turmoil on October 19: "... while it is too early to make definitive predictions, there are encouraging indications that the Iranian crisis may have passed a fever point..." and that "... the Khomeini star seems to be waning."

In early November, Sullivan's reports to Washington suddenly shifted, because of the information forwarded by American diplomats in different parts of Iran. He suggested that Washington begin "thinking the unthinkable," namely a post-Shah Iran. When the situation deteriorated further by December 1978, Sullivan's solution was to strike an accord between the military and moderate elements in the opposition, which he reiterates at length in the book.

This proposal suffered from three deficiencies. First, it was credulous to expect the mainstream religious opposition—particularly Khomeini and those around him in Paris—to accept a deal which left the military largely intact. Although the Sullivan plan required not only the Shah but also most of the senior Iranian military officers to leave Iran, it still retained the military as an institution, and the mullahs could do without a Napoleon, at least at that point. Second, the clergy had in any case pre-empted Sullivan, by wooing certain key military leaders individually. Finally, it failed to account for the fragile standing of the moderate elements in the opposition and the Iranian armed forces. Sullivan apparently did not realize that the opposition leaders who attached themselves closely to the American embassy did so out of weakness, not strength. Similarly, a military force

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which revolved around the Shah's figure was unlikely to remain intact after his departure and negotiate as an institution with the opposition. If Sullivan was to "orchestrate" the turmoil as his colleague Stempel envisaged, the only baton he held as conductor was the armed forces. Alas, he dropped the baton before the overture.

Are there any answers, then, to our questions concerning the information American diplomats possessed and the actions they took during the Iranian Revolution? These two books alongside the embassy papers re-

leased in Iran do provide some. The problem was not a lack of information. A 1976 CIA study found among the embassy papers is in fact remarkably prescient about the Shah's fate. What the American diplomats posted to Iran failed to do was grasp the trend of events until it was too late, develop a coherent strategy in response, or remember the role that accidents and personalities play in any revolution. And that partly, but only partly, explains the replacement of the penguins by crows, who incidentally thrive in deserts. □

ELVIS

Albert Goldman / McGraw-Hill / \$14.95

Mitchell S. Ross

Not long ago, in search of a basketball game, I flipped the television dial and found myself facing a celluloid image of the late Elvis. Curiosity caught me. My arrival at the game was delayed. I had a short time earlier read the biography in question here, and so was familiar with the swinish maneuvers of Colonel Thomas Parker, who moved Elvis into movies after he had attained early success as a singer. I knew that this had been done for reasons of greed; that Elvis had never displayed the slightest aptitude for dramatic or film acting; that his movies were never highly esteemed by any intelligent person. And yet, I was unprepared for the sheer awfulness of Elvis the actor. Here was a man utterly out of place. His movements were awkward; mere burps would have been as eloquent as speech from such a source. I watched for a few minutes, and then I could not stand it any longer. I switched the dial, found my game, and settled down.

My thoughts avoided Elvis for several minutes. The game was good. Then there was a timeout, a commercial, and . . . behold! Magic

Mitchell S. Ross is author of *The Literary Politicians* and *An Invitation to Our Times*.

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Johnson's turning Seven-Up! A superstar is selling soda pop! Switch stations. Back to Elvis. Back to the dreadful diction, the awesome idiocy. Back to Elvis? Back to Bach! I switched off the television set.

Such is popular culture in the Republic that we are blessed with many talents both unique and marketable. The trouble is that those who are unique tend to get marketed, and, once marketed, they cease to be unique. In the case of Elvis, not only did the talent cease to be unique; it ceased entirely to exist. Indeed, it can fairly be argued that not only the talent ceased to exist, but the human being, too. By the end of his 42-year stay on this planet, the late Mr. Presley was doped from head to toe. He was obese—not after the fashion of Santa Claus or Luciano Pavarotti, in whom fatness of body encloses largeness of spirit, but in the manner of one who has lost all self-control, and is beyond caring.

Elvis was a hugely successful mess. Such people proliferate in the United States of America, where success is more highly valued than character. Are there no second acts in American lives? Bah! There are second acts, and third acts, and fourth acts. But in the case of messes such as Elvis and the author of this famous, erroneous observation, F. Scott Fitzgerald, there are often only two acts—wild success followed by abysmal failure. The success is professional; the failure, personal.

Why? Well, why not? I believe it was James Thurber who, asked why so many great American authors have been ruined by alcohol, answered that once the authors become great they can afford to buy whiskey by the case.

It was Elvis's fortune to fall into the hands of Colonel Parker, a very fat, Mephistophelean fellow with a bit of the air of Barnum about him. Such characters are as common in this country as hugely successful messes. Colonel Parker had the power to freeze Elvis with a stare, and he did not hesitate to exercise this power. With his control established, Colonel Parker proceeded to swing a long series of deals which, however lucrative they may have been for Elvis and the Colonel, were absolutely ruinous to the integrity of Elvis as a man and as an artist.

I hear a snicker. An artist? Elvis? Why, yes, of course. He was no Beethoven; not even a Paganini. His most ardent admirers may indeed be mere hinds recently graduated from hookworm. But somewhere along the way Elvis developed an honest and original gift for song. Aided by sensitive, intelligent management, he might well have crooned his way into old age, with wrinkled beauties from Biloxi swooning at his every warble, much as grandmas from Hoboken now sit dreamily beside the slot machines in contemplation of Frank Sinatra.

Instead he became a monster—

spendthrift, drug-crazed, orgiastic, incapable of love. It did not help, of course, that the various sharks of the entertainment industry picked up where Colonel Parker left off. The Colonel knew all too well that he himself lacked the polish to handle the Hollywoodians, and so he took care to arrange respectable alliances. This virtually guaranteed that Elvis would exist in circumstances of unrelieved depravity, and so it was.

From time to time he would show signs of some interest in the world beyond drugs, sex, and rock 'n' roll. A woman here, a swami there: These threatened to make a new man of Elvis, but soon the iron hand of Colonel Parker would reach out and seize back the controls. Married life was for Elvis an impossibility, as the King of Rock 'n' Roll could not stand the idea of sexual relations with a married woman, let alone with a mother. Once their child was born, Elvis and Priscilla Presley ceased sleeping together. Shortly thereafter, Priscilla left Elvis for a karate instructor.

A really first-rate psychiatrist might have helped Elvis; indeed, any authoritative male who could have rivaled Colonel Parker might have helped Elvis. But things did not work out that way. The Colonel made of Elvis a great success, and Elvis made of himself a phenomenal failure: a sad story, thoroughly American. In this long book, exhaustively researched and execrably written, Albert Goldman exhumes the corpse for public inspection. □

THE FATE OF THE EARTH

Jonathan Schell / Alfred A. Knopf / \$11.95

Vic Gold

"Tell me," the Seeker of Ultimate Truth asked the Great Guru, "what is the Meaning of Life?"

The Great Guru sat silent, then slowly framed his reply: "Life," he intoned, "is a Circle."

That he said, and nothing more.

Naturally, the Seeker of Ultimate Truth, having wandered the Earth to find the Great Guru, was nonplussed; not to mention, a trifle angry.

"I cross the Seven Seas to ask you, the Great Guru, the Meaning of Life,

Vic Gold, author of PR as in President, lives in Washington.

and THAT's your answer?" he said. "That Life is a Goddamned Circle?" The Great Guru was much perplexed.

"You mean," he asked plaintively, "Life ISN'T a Circle?"

You've heard the joke, now read the book.

According to the literary legend that accompanies this Sublime Tract, its author, an editor for the *New Yorker*, invested no less than half-a-decade in contemplation of our post-

nuclear dilemma, playing both roles, Seeker and Guru.

What, he asks in his capacity as Seeker, is the Fate of the Earth?

Then, after 231 transcendent pages pondering the metaphysical implications of the American-Soviet nuclear predicament, Jonathan Schell takes on the robes of the Great Guru, as follows:

"Two paths lie before us," he writes. "One leads to death, the other to life."

Well, I'll be goddamned. Think of it: two paths. And all this time I'd been under the impression . . .

Ah, well, it serves me right for not being a devotee of contemplative *New Yorker* tracts, having acquired the slovenly habit, in the years since A.J. Liebling errantly chose the Wrong Path, of looking only at the magazine's cartoons, which are intentionally funny.

But wait: Could it be that I do "Jonathan Schell" a gross injustice? That both his tract and legend are towering send-ups, in the grand tradition of the old *New Yorker* of S.J. Perelman, Woolcott Gibbs, James Thurber, and Corey Ford? That this anguished *cri du cerveau* is a deliberately banal exercise in the tired dialectic of the Bertrand Russell school of antinuclear protest, a dark parody aimed at mocking the vacuous moral pretense of that movement with such lines as:

"In weighing the fate of the earth and, with it, our own fate, we stand before a mystery, and in tampering with the earth we tamper with a mystery. We are in deep ignorance."

Woody Allen, come out from behind that curtain. I see your hand, you irreverent rascal. Two paths indeed. Why, your very *nom de plume* is a giveaway. Like Corey Ford's "John Riddell," it is part of the send-up. "Schell," of course—as in Schell game.

And yet, and yet . . .

If this is the case, why are all the most deep-creased Liberal brows of the age taking this book to their collective bosom, greeting it, even in advance of publication, as "the most important book of the decade. Perhaps of the century" (Harrison Salisbury); "exceptionally important reading" (Averell Harriman); a "historic" work that "should be read by all Americans" (Walter Mondale); and trumping that, "required reading . . . for every concerned citizen of the world" (Gary Hart); "one of the most important works of recent years . . . there may still be hope to save our civilization" (Walter Cronkite); "the new Bible of our time"

(Helen Caldicott); and on and on? Needless to say, Barry Commoner loves it, as does Thomas Watson, Jr.; not to overlook the hosannas of Mark Hatfield, John Hersey, Jerome Wiesner, the ubiquitous Father Hesburgh, the hyperpyretic Rabbi Schindler, and the terminally empathetic Studs Terkel.

These are serious people all, discriminating readers not apt to confuse an important book with a spoof. Mondale, if memory serves, was once Vice President of the United States. Harriman participated in the grueling negotiations that determined the shape of the table for the U.S.-North Vietnam peace talks of the late 1960s. Caldicott, as president of Physicians for Social Responsibility, can be expected to know a new Bible when she sees one. Hatfield, as a leader of the "nuclear freeze" campaign, can hardly be awed by yet another eye-rolling, hand-wringing dissertation on its behalf. And surely the redoubtable Cronkite, who in recent decades has not merely witnessed but defined The Way It Is for his fellow earthlings, does not truly find "hope to save our civilization" in the revealed truth that all we need to secure world peace is universal disarmament and a new global federation. That idea, after all, has been kicking around for a while; though, admittedly, it lacked the cachet of appearing on the pages of the *New Yorker*.

What then? There are three possible explanations to pursue at this point. The first and most generous is that the people in question have not actually read Schell's book. The second is that they have read it, but are incredibly obtuse and/or trendy, even for deep-creased Liberals contemplating the challenge of Soviet power in a nuclear age. The third is that my Woody Allen hunch is wrong; that *The Fate of the Earth* is not dark parody but transparent jackassery, and a Jonathan Schell is indeed alive and well at the *New Yorker*, assured, no doubt, that his five years spent seeking after the ultimate truth of the circularity of life was not in vain. He has written a book which, in the words of Barry Commoner, "gives us hope that we will, in fact, put an end to the horrendous threat of nuclear war."

How do the Liberals say? *Simplistic*? Yes, that's the word. Would that the Great Commoner, this one time, were right. But skeptic that I am, I remain unpersuaded and will temper my hope until *The Fate of the Earth* is translated into Russian, for must

reading by concerned Muscovites.

Let the Gideons of this "new Bible" take on that project. It would be the worthiest of missionary efforts, but one, I fear, doomed to failure. The men in the Kremlin would never abide a Schell game in their country, and for the most obvious of reasons: They are, as we know, a humorless lot. □

CORRESPONDENCE

(continued from page 29)

support for the expulsion of the Arabs ("But how are the Israelis permanently to absorb the Arab population of these territories and retain the Jewish character so essential to Israel's spiritual survival?") stinks of Dachau. How far off can one be? Has Mr. Ross forgotten that the Arabs were the majority in Palestine? It would be well for him to examine carefully how they came to be a minority in a few short years.

—Albert R. Doyle

Valley Cottage, New York

I am not an Orientalist or a literary critic, but I can recognize ethnic contempt when I see it and Mr. Ross's article ("Allah and Man at Columbia," *TAS*, May 1982) reeks with it. The same patronizing sarcasm can be found in numerous writings by English politicians and historians on the subject of Irish nationalism. At least Mr. Ross is honest enough to explain his attitude

by telling the reader that "the Jewish State is a special case among the nations of the modern world." Perhaps this will comfort the Palestinian family whose home is blown up because a son or nephew is a PLO suspect and maybe it will explain to Arab students in the West Bank why their books must be censored by the Israeli military and their teachers carefully monitored lest they get too "uppity" on the idea that Arabs also have the right to a homeland.

Like Mr. Ross I wouldn't want to live in a state like Syria or a "cage I can call home," but if I were a Palestinian living in Nablus or Gaza I might easily prefer such a state to the one where I now live. At least in such a "cage" I would not have to worry about being dragged out of my home in the middle of the night or shot down in the street by Yiddish Nazis posing as religious settlers. This is a benefit of Israeli rule that Ross coyly ignores.

Yassir Arafat doesn't need PLO terrorists to fan the fires of Palestinian nationalism. The Israeli army and politicians with their benign neglect of Jewish fanatics in the West Bank and the rantings of goons like Meir Kahane are doing a fine job of killing any chance of co-existence between Jew and Arab.

Mr. Ross's article will delight fans of the Master Race theory who mourned its death in Hitler's bunker. He shows it is alive and well in Israel and the West Bank. However, this time it is being subsidized by that

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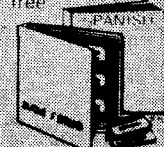
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Boobus Americanus, the U.S. taxpayer.
—Thomas J. Mullen, Jr.
Flemington, New Jersey

The New, New, New Nietzsche

The cover of the May issue of *The American Spectator* and the Werner J. Dannhauser essay ("The Trivialization of Friedrich Nietzsche") to which it is unfortunately related demand comment.

Under the guise of protecting us conservatives from a left-wing plot to show that Nietzsche was not a Nazi, Dannhauser attempts to rescue Nietzsche's work from trivialization at the hands of "poets, psychoanalysts, existentialists, [and] members of the New Left . . .," among other equally terrifying types. His rescue attempt seems to me just about as effective as our attempt to

rescue the Iranian hostages: that is, it breaks down in the desert and limps home empty-handed. Yet whereas our attempt to rescue the hostages began honorably and ended as a media event, Dannhauser's endeavor is conceived and executed—self-executed if I may say so—strictly as a media event.

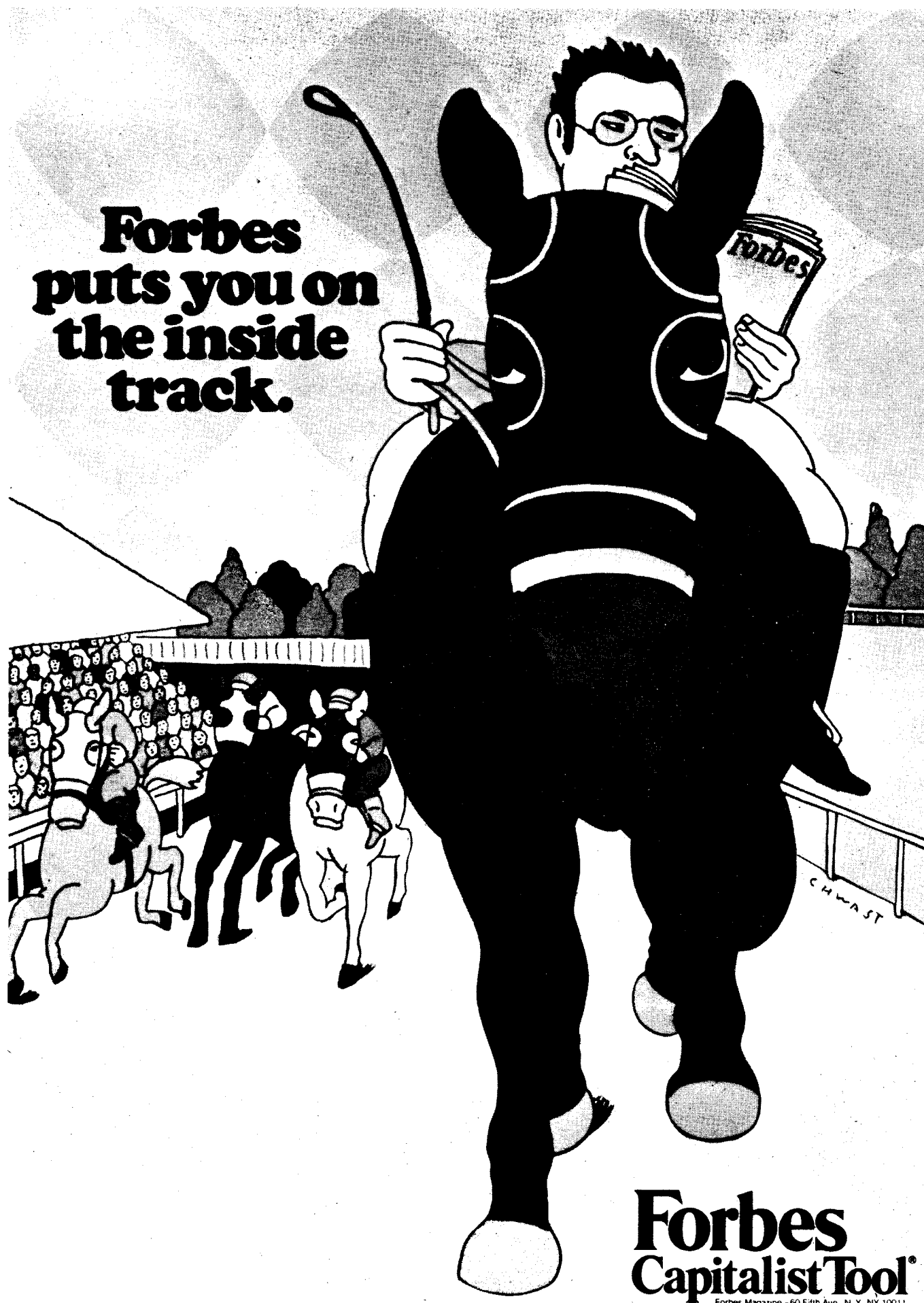
While trying desperately to cater to the conservative readers of *The*

American Spectator, Dannhauser seems almost incidentally inclined to guess that Nietzsche was, in fact, a proto-Nazi and that, in fact, those who read Nietzsche any other way—including Heidegger—only succeed in trivializing him in a "morass of subjectivity." (Incidentally, Heidegger was not the "first Rector of the University of Freiburg under Hitler's rule," as Dannhauser claims. Wilhelm von Moellendorf was. Has Dannhauser perhaps lost the facts in the morass of his own strictly rhetorical subjectivity?)

As to Nietzsche's role as a precursor of Nazism, Dannhauser uses the same arguments as the Nazis themselves, and he uses them with equal perspicacity. Thus because martial images and allegories, as well as other metaphors glorifying the life of struggle, are found in Nietzsche's texts, Nietzsche obviously, according to Dannhauser, endorses "Fascism." Let me dismiss this solecism—the Fascists were not Nazis and Nietzsche was neither—by observing that both the Bible and the *Bhagavad Gita* abound in similar imagery. Thus, for example, we may cite, "Thy men shall fall by the sword, and the mighty be in the war" (Isaiah 3:17), and, "There can we see heroic warriors, powerful archers . . ." (*Bhagavad Gita*). Both of these passages are parts of extended allegories dramatizing the human soul's struggle for wisdom—however that may be construed.

The point, then, is that martial imagery, in Nietzsche as in these classical cases, is a device used to depict an inner struggle of the self with itself. This is known about Nietzsche even if Dannhauser and the Nazis are unable—or perhaps unwilling—to see the point. Thus for the edification of both Dannhauser and the Nazis we must fairly distinguish a use of Nietzsche's texts from the texts themselves, just as we must also distinguish a hammer from the murderer's use of the hammer. Or are we instead to conclude that the presence of martial imagery in the *Bhagavad Gita* and the Bible is *prima facie* evidence that these books are themselves "Fascistic"?

As to the theme of "trivializing" Nietzsche, there are many things that might in fairness be said about the straining for profundity and the over-interpretation of some of the writers in *The New Nietzsche*, but unfortunately Dannhauser has failed to say any of them. Instead, like some of his "left-wing" and "existentialist" foes, Dannhauser has used Nietzsche as an occasion to air some of his pet grievances (e.g., subject-
(continued on page 40)



S P E C T A T O R ' S J O U R N A L

Spooks and Scholars

Its name is the Consortium for the Study of Intelligence (CSI). Its 25 founding members are academics drawn primarily from the social sciences.* Its existence dates from the spring of 1979, a time when U.S. intelligence agencies, the CIA and FBI in particular, had been in the doghouse for several years. Some members of Congress and then-Vice President Walter Mondale were even prepared to lock up the doghouse for good and throw away the key.

It is no exaggeration to say that this assault on the CIA and FBI—indeed, upon the very concept of intelligence itself—marked the first time, certainly in modern history, that the leadership of a large country deliberately undertook a campaign of unilateral intelligence disarmament at the same time that another country, a sworn adversary, was multiplying its intelligence armament.

We will never fully know what this anti-intelligence campaign meant to American security—and what it still means. In the light of ever-increasing Soviet KGB activity, however, some of which was detected by depleted U.S. counterintelligence forces and some exposed by sheer accident, e.g., the Falcon and the Snowman, it is safe to assume that for almost a decade the KGB never had it so good. Hence, the CSI's underlying theme, "Intelligence Requirements for the 1980s": What can be done to restore the structures of U.S. intelligence and counterintelligence to some effectiveness?

Intelligence, of course, is one of the most misunderstood functions of democratic governments, particularly in the United States where the CIA is barely 35 years old. A major cause of this misperception has been the unwillingness of most American uni-

versities to include, as part of their curriculum, any discussion of intelligence and its relation to the government's decision-making machinery. Intelligence has been a no-no, the untouchable, unteachable area in the academy, despite the fact that intelligence—for good or ill—is integral to the foreign policy of any modern nation. One reason—ideology notwithstanding—for the paucity of academic research on intelligence has been that reliable information about the elements of intelligence has hitherto been unavailable, aside from sensational exposés by former agents such as Philip Agee, Thomas Braden, Victor Marchetti, and others. Certainly, what information was available until the mid-1970s would hardly have met acceptable standards for a doctoral dissertation. However, a flood of material, formerly classified, became publicly available in the wake of House and Senate intelligence committee investigations, new legislation such as the Freedom of Information Act, and the presidential guidelines for the CIA and FBI.

The academics who formed CSI were no experts in intelligence; they were teachers of law, history, and political science concerned that neither they nor the informed public, nor even the intelligence community itself, understood the function of intelligence in an open society. They proposed two tasks for the Consortium: first, to encourage objective, scholarly, unclassified research into the relationship between intelligence, foreign policy, and U.S. decision-making; second, to provide "an institutional focus for a balanced, coherent understanding of the role of intelligence in a free society."

Underlying these themes is a consensus that intelligence is not some luxury a democratic government can do without, even though it can be argued that a successful intelligence establishment in a democratic society is virtually impossible to come by. While some issues in public life can be envisioned as solvable—"solutions" to poverty, busing, abortion, recession—the functioning of the CIA or the FBI in a free society is not one of them.

The main difficulty today derives from the fantasy that we can somehow pass a law to establish an intelligence agency composed of

nature's noblemen, and that under the supervision of keen-eyed, close-mouthed congressional oversight committees everything will work out as it should.

Unfortunately, all my years of study have convinced me that there are no two ways about it. You either believe in the need for a CIA despite all the concomitant problems and the CIA's own self-inflicted wounds, or you do not, preferring rather "spy-in-the-sky" surveillance of the USSR, which is about as valid as promises of "pie-in-the-sky."

Further, I am persuaded that controls over intelligence agencies are difficult to enforce. If after five years of congressional oversight, there is no scandal, no hue and cry about the CIA or FBI, no newspaper exposés, then you can be sure that the intelligence agencies have failed in their mission: namely, as Ray Cline has written, in providing "properly evaluated information from all sources, however collected." An intelligence agency, if it is to function at all, must always test the outermost limits of its legitimate powers. If it adheres to the letter of the law, it will not function. The KGB will see to that. If we are not prepared to have a CIA which occasionally will operate outside the

law and with nobody the wiser, then we'd be better off without an intelligence agency. The CIA, as Norman Podhoretz has described it, represents "the main institutional capability the nation possesses for conducting a covert policy of containment."

These, of course, are my views, not necessarily shared either by CSI or any of its members. But these points have been raised at CSI meetings and will be again next fall in a special session devoted to the problem of "domestic intelligence." These meetings follow two rules:

First, no secrecy to the proceedings. Neither the papers presented, nor the commentaries, debates, or discussions are classified. The proceedings are published in book form for public sale.

Second, papers on various intelligence topics are commissioned and assigned to experts, no matter whether they are ex-CIA officers, congressional staffers, or academics.

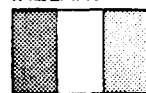
The first symposium, April 27-28, 1979, in Washington, D.C., introduced the subject "Elements of Intelligence"—covert action, clandestine collection, counterintelligence, analysis, and estimates—all of which are, of course, interrelated. The

*Among the academics are Professors Adda B. Bozeman, Samuel P. Huntington, John Norton Moore, Robert Nisbet, Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, Richard E. Pipes, Antonin Scalia, Paul Seabury, Allen Weinstein, and James Q. Wilson. Professor Roy Godson of Georgetown University and the National Strategy Information Center has been CSI coordinator from its inception.

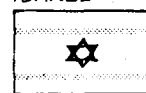
Arnold Beichman, a founding member of the Consortium for the Study of Intelligence, will be a visiting Scholar at the Hoover Institution this fall.

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participants included nine academics, twelve former CIA and other intelligence agency officers, and eight congressional committee staffers, among others.

Since then, four other symposia have been held, also in Washington, each one dealing with one of the major elements of intelligence. Five volumes of the proceedings have already been published.† After two

years of experience, CSI's members decided to survey several hundred universities to see whether there was

†The five volumes, *Elements of Intelligence*, *Covert Action*, *Counterintelligence*, *Analysis and Estimates*, *Clandestine Collection*, are available from Transaction Books, New Brunswick, N.J. or the National Strategy Information Center, 1730 Rhode Island Ave., Washington, D.C. 20036.

any interest in a teaching seminar on intelligence for full-time university teachers. The response was favorable. In July 1981, twenty-five faculty members from American universities convened for eight days at Bowdoin College in Maine to study and discuss the subject matter of the CSI symposia and how to turn the material into academic courses, complete with bibliography, reading lists, and

examination questions. Another faculty seminar is scheduled this summer again at Bowdoin.

That CSI is determined to foster awareness about intelligence among social scientists does not mean that CSI is a crew of ideological academics full of Mittyesque dreams of espionage. Indeed, if there had been such a grasp of intelligence during the 1950s, and if there had been objective academic study and analysis of U.S. intelligence even with what material was then available, much of the unpleasantness that emerged during the congressional investigations of the 1970s might have been avoided—and much of the subsequent injury, some of it perhaps irreparable, to American intelligence as well.

—Arnold Beichman

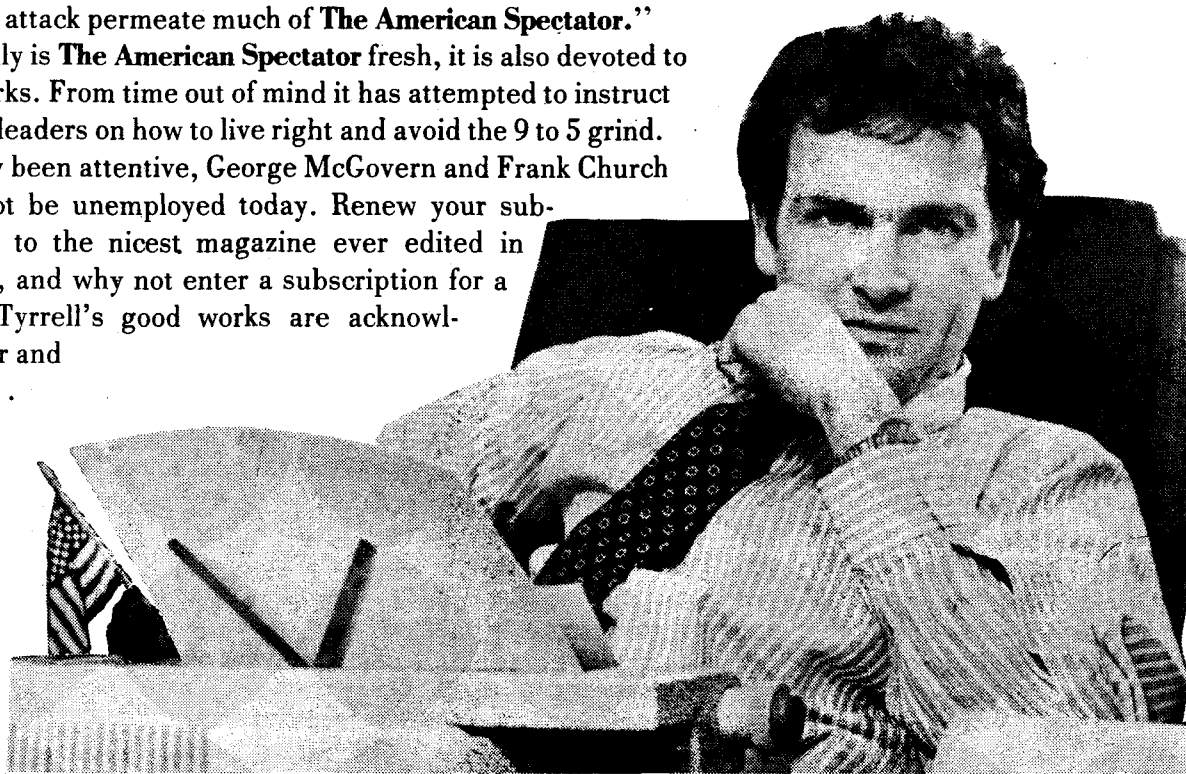
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CORRESPONDENCE

(continued from page 38)

tivity) before an audience he thinks will always applaud in all the right places. Wherein, thus, does Dannhauser differ from those he says "trivialize" Nietzsche? And why, by the way, is liberating Nietzsche from the Nazis a move in the trivialization of Nietzsche?

The point of all this is to say that the question of Nietzsche and the Nazis is a pseudo-issue of concern only to those whose preoccupations are with the titillating and the vulgar rather than with philosophy, politics, or scholarship. Why has Dannhauser lent himself to such an endeavor? Why has *The American Spectator* sponsored his undertaking? For Dannhauser whose good intelligence occasionally has been put to better use I can hazard no guess. For *The American Spectator* I very much regret to hazard that its participation in this sordid affair is due to the fact that, as with its left-wing opponents, it has discovered the power of playing to the expectations of its audience, and thus, like *Der Spiegel* some months ago, it trots out the Nazis and Nietzsche for the prurient delectation of its readers. Is *The American Spectator* thus now straining to be chic? Has it been taken over by beauticians?

Finally, I shall bring these calm, even-tempered observations to a close with a set of questions to Dannhauser and an exhortation to *The American Spectator*.

To Dannhauser: Why in heaven's name is the French appropriation of Heidegger's reading of Nietzsche an undesirable thing? Even granting the connection you assume between this reading and "the Left," would not any reading which undermines the fantasies of Marxism be a cause for

celebration and a further augury of its demise? Would we not be, at least in this regard, in the debt of these new readings—readings you, in any event, erroneously attribute to the Left? Are your fulminations, in fact, nothing more than an extended and misdirected ad hominem argument? Finally, pray tell what is the difference between Nazism and vulgar Nazism?

To *The American Spectator* I am obliged to observe that I think Dannhauser's essay is so corrupt that were it not for the fact that I would miss R. Emmett Tyrrell's fulminations and Tom Bethell's analyses I would cancel my subscription. But then there would be scarcely anything worth reading. Indeed, in a not too distant past when *The American Spectator* was more interested in the grit of things than in their glitter, it would have invited David Allison to review Dannhauser's own book on Nietzsche, a work presumably exempt from the class of interpretations that trivialize Nietzsche. It is a task Allison would carry out with a great deal more wit and fairness than Dannhauser has employed in his mugging of *The New Nietzsche*.

—Harold Alderman
Professor of Philosophy
Sonoma State University
Rohnert Park, California
Author, *Nietzsche's Gift*, etc.
Member, Executive Committee,
Nietzsche Society
Member, Program Committee, North
American Nietzsche Society
N.E.H. Fellow

Werner J. Dannhauser replies:
Professor Alderman begins by likening my article to America's ill-fated attempt to rescue our hostages from Iran. Never before has my work been compared to a helicopter. I am deeply grateful.

My perceptive critic is right about one thing. Heidegger was indeed not the first rector of the University of Freiburg under Hitler's rule; he was the first to be appointed under that rule. In an early draft I said that, but that is an explanation and not an excuse. I regret the error.

Alas, I am unable to regret anything else. For example, I am not sorry that I took it for granted that discerning readers would understand that Nazism is the most virulent kind of fascism. I still take that for granted.

Professor Alderman goes on to argue (if one can call it that) that not everybody who uses "martial imagery" favors war. I think he has just discovered that water is wet and I congratulate him, but my article discussed Nietzsche's meaning rather than his imagery. I simply fail

to recall any passages by Nietzsche that favor the beating of swords into ploughshares but perhaps Professor Alderman and I use different versions of Nietzsche or of the Bible or of both.

Of course, my critic might contend that not every use of a text is legitimate. I agree. When the Bible is cited in an argument favoring war as such, it is being abused. When Nietzsche is cited in that way he is sometimes used, unfortunately. The distinction between use and abuse runs through my article and can be understood by the meanest capacity. Well, almost.

Incidentally, Professor Alderman never comes to grips with Nietzsche's argument for slavery. Why not?

Before turning to the specific questions asked of me, I must plead innocent to the charge that I underestimate Heidegger's work. After all, I wrote that Heidegger's book "remains quite simply the best book about Nietzsche ever written." I was comparing it not only to *Nietzsche's View of Socrates*, by me, but to *Nietzsche's Gift* by Harold Alderman, a book from which I learned something, though I have forgotten what it was.

Now to the questions asked of me. (1) The French appropriation of Heidegger is an undesirable thing because it involves the trivialization of both Heidegger and Nietzsche. (2) Whenever possible I prefer to combat "the fantasies of Marxism" with the truth rather than misreadings. Don't you? (3) Yes, my fulminations are always more than an extended and misdirected ad hominem argument. That's why I am fond of them. (4) The difference between Nazism and vulgar Nazism can be most simply stated as follows. Vulgar Nazism is oblivious to Heidegger's work. The context of my distinction made that clear (a context is that in which the text is embedded).

Finally, permit me to endorse Professor Alderman's suggestion that *The American Spectator* invite David Allison to comment on my book about Nietzsche. I need the publicity and I welcome penpals. □

EDITORIAL

(continued from page 6)

century, some snoozing nearer the Middle Ages, simply declared that the planet's resources are "the common heritage of mankind." The diplomats agreed. The backward nations insisted that seabed resources be forked over to a "Seabed Authority" from where they would be distributed to such worthies as populate the PLO. The diplomats agreed again.

Only a handful of men in the Reagan Administration prevented us from going along with such an idiotic scheme. Now they are being branded as ideologues. Well, if they are ideologues their ideology is American national interest and a sense that the advanced nations know something that the backward nations do not know. The ideology of those who refer to the world's resources as the "common heritage of mankind" is more easily codified; it is the ideology of Third World socialism, and it is not esteemed for economic progress.

The Seabed Authority was, in economic terms, quackery. It would be an international organization modeled on the United Nations General Assembly, thus putting the backward nations of the world in control. It would have its own sources of revenue from licensing and taxation and would be able to strangle seabed mining. In other words, the Seabed Authority would have the same control over deep-seabed mining as the socialized Third World countries have over enterprise within their own impoverished boundaries. So much for the economic development of the seas.

The Law of the Sea was, then, the ultimate con perpetuated by the Third World ideologues of UniWorld, a scheme for pilfering the wealth of the civilized world while the backward nations sank ever deeper into the kind of barbarism that has recently been visited upon Uganda, the Central African Republic, Southeast Asia, and other less notorious hellholes of the globe. We are fortunate the United States has rid itself of this mischief. Had Jimmy Carter been in the White House you can be sure the United States would already have been bound over to the Seabed Authority, thus dooming the economic advances possible from American consortiums mining the seas.

What new adventures our diplomats will be getting us into in the years to come remain a mystery. But from the Law of the Sea Conference it is clear that many of them have simply given up on the notion of American national interest. They are apparently ignorant of how America came to be more prosperous than Senegal. They do not seem to believe that our advanced civilization has

requirements or concerns that must be secure against grasping leaders in the Third World. Only seven or so nations on earth possess the capacity and will to explore and mine the seas. They ought not to be shackled to the economic archaicism of the Third World. □

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The Cornell Daily Sun

A stimulating report on the advanced thoughts presented at a recent panel discussion for the bull dyke intelligentsia of Cornell University:

I just think about Cinderella singing "Someday My Princess Will Come," Prof. Sandra Bem, psychology and women's studies, said last night in a panel discussion titled "Is Heterosexuality Compulsory? Perspective on Homophobia."

Prof. Isabel V. Hull, history, explained that sexuality is the only sphere "where historians assume there have been no differences or change" over time.

"Sexuality has only one form. It has not gone through any changes from the Babylonians to Modern Germany," she said, explaining the perspective of 19th-century historians.

From the historian's point of view, sexuality is "an oatmeal-colored background upon which other colors are splashed, such as revolutions, wars, crop failures and other momentous events."

Issues such as women, family and children in addition to sexuality have been "sucked into a vortex of silence," by historians.

She suggested instead, that historians ought to interpret the past in more suggestive and subtle ways.

Lesbian Possibilities

Nancy Bereano, editor of the feminist series at Crossing Press, explained that she grew up in the Bronx in the 1950's as a "nice, Jewish girl" who was never offered even "the possibility of the choice" of being a lesbian.

Bereano admitted it took her a long time to see that she was living in a world that she did not design.

[April 16, 1982]

Yet another simian speaks out in the Cornell Daily Sun:

Our opinion of the situation in the country of El Salvador is that the guerrillas and the government should come to a final agreement as to what should be done. If they can not agree on a solution, then a third country should peacefully assist them in the decision-making process. But the USA should leave the whole issue of El Salvador to other nations; we should think about our own problems.

We think the USA should leave El Salvador alone because we have so many of our own problems and also because what we are presently doing in that country is dumb. First of all, why is our government supporting the El Salvador junta when we so vocally criticized the government of Poland during its recent crisis?

The Polish government is suppressing its people who had been very active in trying to get some basic human rights. Isn't it the same in El Salvador? The guerrillas are saying that life is unfair in El Salvador and so the government has to be changed so that life can get fairer. The government is suppressing these people who are asking for human rights, just like in Poland. So why is the USA not supporting one government, but supporting the other? This seems stupid to us.

Secondly, take a look at land-redistribution. Our government says this is an example of the El Salvador junta trying to be more fair to its poor people. But when peasants try to claim the land they were just given, they are shot by the government's soldiers. The El Salvador government is killing innocent people. How can they do that?

The rebels in El Salvador are not going to turn that country communist and they are not in any way a threat to the USA. So, if we have to be involved, let's pick the right side, the guerrillas' side. But hopefully the USA will learn to leave little countries alone.

—The middle school
"Current Issues" class,
The Alternative Community School
Ithaca

[April 26, 1982]

The Great Books Series

A courageous and iconoclastic defense of "rational intellect" and Jesus Christ (deceased) the philosophical positivist from Prof. Robert MacNeil, a TV intellectual adrift in the high seas of lucubration:

Instinctively, I find it more satisfying to belong with those people in all countries who put their trust in Man's best quality, his rational intellect and its ability to recognize and solve problems. It is distressing that the recent course of American politics has caused that trust to be ridiculed or dismissed as some sort of soft-headedness, inappropriate to a virile nation confronting the dangerous world. It will be unfortunate if being a "liberal" remains an embarrassment, if young Americans should begin to believe that conservatives are the only realists.

Each has its absurd extreme: liberalism tending to inspire foolish altruism and unwarranted optimism; conservatism leading to unbridled selfishness and paranoia. Taken in moderation, I prefer the liberal impulse: it is the impulse behind the great forces that have advanced mankind, like Christianity. I find it hard to believe that Jesus Christ was a political conservative, whatever views are espoused in his name today.

The Right Place at the Right Time
by Robert MacNeil

[Little, Brown and Company, 1982]

The Indiana Daily Student

The student gazette of Indiana University reports on the musical doings of Leonard Bernstein and of a visionary opera now in the works:

Students in the School of Music got a rare treat as composer Leonard Bernstein offered his services as a teacher to a conducting class in the Musical Arts Center. The former conductor of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, Bernstein is in Bloomington as the first fellow of the IU Institute for Advanced Study. During his fellowship, the maestro is composing an opera which he says takes place in a funeral home and examines the problems of communication in American life.

[January 26, 1982]

The Amherst Student

A report on the kind of hoary exotica now appearing on the campus Chautauqua circuit:

"Africa will be free, united and socialist. No force upon earth can stop it," concluded Stokely Carmichael, a civil rights leader who is currently a spokesman for the All-African Peoples' Revolutionary Party, in his lecture last Tuesday night in Johnson Chapel. Carmichael's talk, in which he praised socialism and attacked Zionism, was the final event of Straight Ahead IX, a series of lectures and debates sponsored by the Straight Ahead Executive Committee. . . . Opening the lecture with the contention that, "Human beings are on the face of the earth to serve other human beings," Carmichael went on to say that "The capitalist system seeks to make people totally irresponsible." Capitalism "makes thinking difficult," he charged, and keeps people at an "animal level."

Carmichael, who said he has read at least one book on Zionism every month since 1965, opposes Zionism on a number of grounds. These include his belief that Judaism is a religion but that Jews do not make up a particular race.

[April 8, 1982]

The New York Review of Books

A grateful Prof. Howard E. Gruber of Rutgers University, rhapsodizes on the travail that he has freely added to his already hectic life as a conscience-prone Prof. at a leading institution of higher learning:

This is a thank you note to the editors and an invitation to your readers. Last July, when I read the article by George Kennan, "A Modest Proposal" [NYR, July 16], I was deeply disturbed and spent the rest of the summer quietly thinking about the danger of nuclear war, wondering what to do. By the fall I had decided that I must spend at least one day of every week working for nuclear disarmament. This has been hard, but facing up to the danger feels better than not. So thank you and George Kennan for that.

[June 10, 1982]

The State News

From the campus of Michigan State University comes an auspicious report on the philosophical works of a rising female Nietzsche ever on the lookout for that "man with a ten-foot pole":

MSU philosophy Professor Marilyn Frye is a "separatist," a woman who has as little interaction with men as possible. But Frye says that does not mean she hates men.

"There is no reason for me to hate men, because I have no connection with them," she said. "I have severed the traditional service relationship, where the woman is a man's ego-booster, friend, lover, proofreader, laundry-woman and everything else," she says. "I just didn't want to be a man's support system."

Frye teaches classes about the philosophical aspects of feminism, and is the author of a pamphlet, "Separatism and Power." In her pamphlet, she explains separatism and its use as a political tool.

Although there is no fixed definition of separatism, it generally refers to the motivation of any who severs her emotional and physical ties to men, Frye said. . . . Frye said she has resisted the patriarchal system in every sense.

"I am not accessible to men on any level," she said. "I have no male friends, few friendly male acquaintances, and I wouldn't touch a sexual relationship with a man with a 10-foot pole."

Frye said she does engage in friendly "hellos" with her male colleagues, but that's all.

[April 12, 1982]

The New York Times Book Review

In the shrewd fashion of our age the erudite Miss Mavis Gallant reviews a book on the French intellectuals' response to the great events of the thirties and forties (i.e., world-wide depression, the rise of the Axis powers, growing anti-Semitism, the Moscow trials, the Gulag, World War II), notes the futility of their organizing and petitioning, and comes down hard for a no-nonsense response to the events of the era:

All those speeches, those petitions drawn up and circulated, the meetings organized and attended, the marches and demonstrations, the traveling and talking and to-ing and fro-ing. . . . What if the passion, oratory, and persuasiveness had been expended on something closer to home? Votes for women would have been a good start, but as an issue it barely interested anyone.

[April 4, 1982]

The St. Louis Post-Dispatch

A learned Prof. finds the courage to speak out in a time of "national uneasiness" and, dare we say it, incipient dictatorship:

President Reagan's recent use of the locution "put up or shut up" is most inappropriate, coming as it does in a time of national uneasiness. It is interesting to note that Wentworth and Flexner's "Dictionary of American Slang" defines this phrase as a "colloquialism, used originally as an invitation to wager, but now more in anger as a command to shut up." And this is precisely what Mr. Reagan was telling us all to do: "Shut up!"

It seems to me as an intelligent, educated member of the electorate that I have every right to expect a better performance from our chief of state. The presidency should reflect a certain poise and dignity calculated to inspire trust and confidence. Mr. Reagan did not impart such an impression in this disappointing speech.

—Cornelius Joseph Crowley
Professor Emeritus of Linguistics
St. Louis University
[February 21, 1982]

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